

Comics Buyer's Guide Fan Awards for 1985

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3. Favorite Artist
4. Favorite Cover Artist
5. Favorite Comic-Book Story
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9. Favorite Character
10. Favorite Publication about Comics

Phil Seuling Award for Favorite Direct-Sale-Only Title

*"Favorite Book" does not include graphic novels but can include your favorite reprint comics collection, favorite book about comics, etc. - with a copyright date of 1985.

Only material cover-dated 1985 is eligible for consideration. Votes for ineligible material will not be counted.

Anyone may copy and circulate this ballot, and any fan may vote only once and vote for no more than one nominee in each category. Ballot-box stuffing will result in the destruction of all ballots involved. You need not vote in all categories. **Comics Buyer's Guide** is not eligible for Category 10.

A free copy of **Comics Buyer's Guide** for Aug. 1, 1986 (which will carry the results of voting) will be sent to any U.S. voter who does not already have a current or expired subscription to **CBG**. Votes from other countries will be counted, but we regret that a sample copy cannot be sent unless the vote is accompanied by \$1.50 in U.S. funds to cover costs of handling and shipping to another country.

Mail your ballot individually in a single envelope by June 30, 1986 to:

Comics Buyer's Guide Fan Awards
700 East State Street
Iola, Wisconsin 54990

Name Age Male Female (circle one)

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City, State, and ZIP

Please type or print your vote and information clearly.

RENEGADE APPEARANCES

JULY 4-6 CHICAGO COMICCON

Michael Cherkas (The Silent Invasion)
Larry Hancock (The Silent Invasion)
Max Collins (Ms. Tree)
Terry Beatty (Ms. Tree)

Joe Judt (Strata)
Ray Murtaugh (Strata)
Jim Brozman (Strata)
Rick Hoberg (Eternity Smith)
Dennis Mallonee (Eternity Smith)

Dan Day (Cases of Sherlock Holmes)
Bob Burden (Flaming Carrot)
David Darrigo (Wordsmith)
Deni Loubert (Publisher)

Bob Burden (Flaming Carrot)

JULY 25-27 ATLANTA FANTASY FAIR

Rick Hoberg (Eternity Smith)
Dennis Mallonee (Eternity Smith)

Joe Sinardi (Maxwell Mouse Follies)

JULY 31 - AUG 3 SAN DIEGO COMICCON

Michael Cherkas (The Silent Invasion)
Larry Hancock (The Silent Invasion)
Joe Judt (Strata)
Ray Murtaugh (Strata)
Jim Brozman (Strata)

Max Collins (Ms. Tree)
Terry Beatty (Ms. Tree)
David Darrigo (Wordsmith)
Barb Rausch (Neil & Vicky)

Bob Burden (Flaming Carrot)
Dan Day (Cases of Sherlock Holmes)
Dennis Mallonee (Eternity Smith)
Rick Hoberg (Eternity Smith)
Deni Loubert (Publisher)

Please note that there will be a cocktail party at the Golden Apple Comic Shop, 7711 Melrose Ave. in Los Angeles on Tuesday August 5th. It will be hosted by The Golden Apple and Renegade Press as an informal get together for fans to talk to the artists and to see how a company like Renegade survives. Everyone from Renegade will be there (with the exception of R.G. Taylor from Wordsmith). It will run from 7-9 p.m., and probably spill over into the nearest bar, if I know Renegade. Everyone is welcome to come. Bring your friends, even if they don't read comics!!

Ms. TREE

Published twelve times a year by Renegade Press, 10408 Oxnard Street, North Hollywood, CA. 91606. MS. TREE is a work of fiction. All the characters and events portrayed herein are fictional, and any resemblance to real people or incidents is coincidental. All contents © 1985 Max Collins and Terry Beatty. Any inquiries regarding use of the characters, images, or situations depicted should be addressed to Deni Loubert. No unauthorized reproduction allowed except for review or other journalistic purposes. Advertising rates furnished on request. Printed in Canada by Preney Print and Litho Inc., Windsor, Ontario, Canada.

NO. 29

MAY 1986

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MAX COLLINS and
TERRY BEATTY'S

Ms. TREE

200
CANADA
170
IN U.S.

29
MAY

I'VE LEARNED MY
LESSON - NO MATTER
WHAT, I'LL NEVER USE
MY GUN AGAIN!



Ms. TREE "THE OTHER CHEEK"

© 1986 by Max Collins
and Terry Beatty

She's All Better Now..

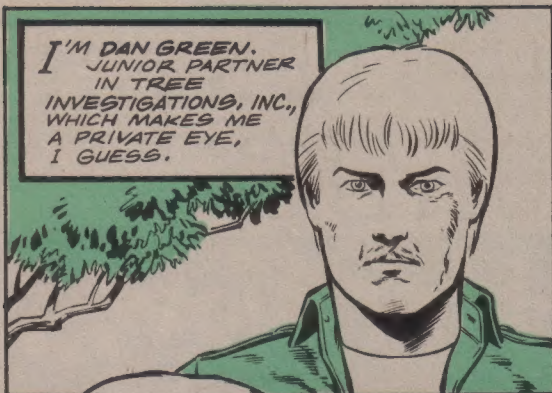
MY BOSS — MS. MICHAEL TREE
— HAS ALWAYS HAD (AT LEAST
AS LONG AS I'VE KNOWN HER)
A DIRECT METHOD OF
HANDLING A PROBLEM.

SHE BLOWS IT AWAY.



Chapter One

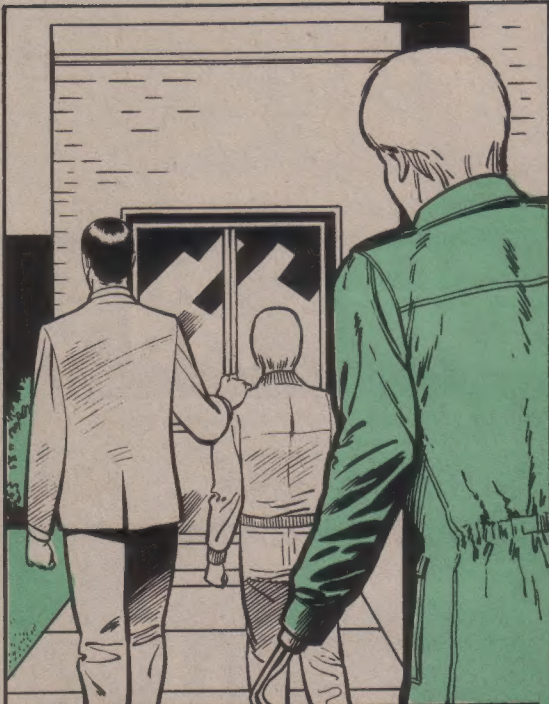
LETTERING & ART ASSIST: GARY KATO



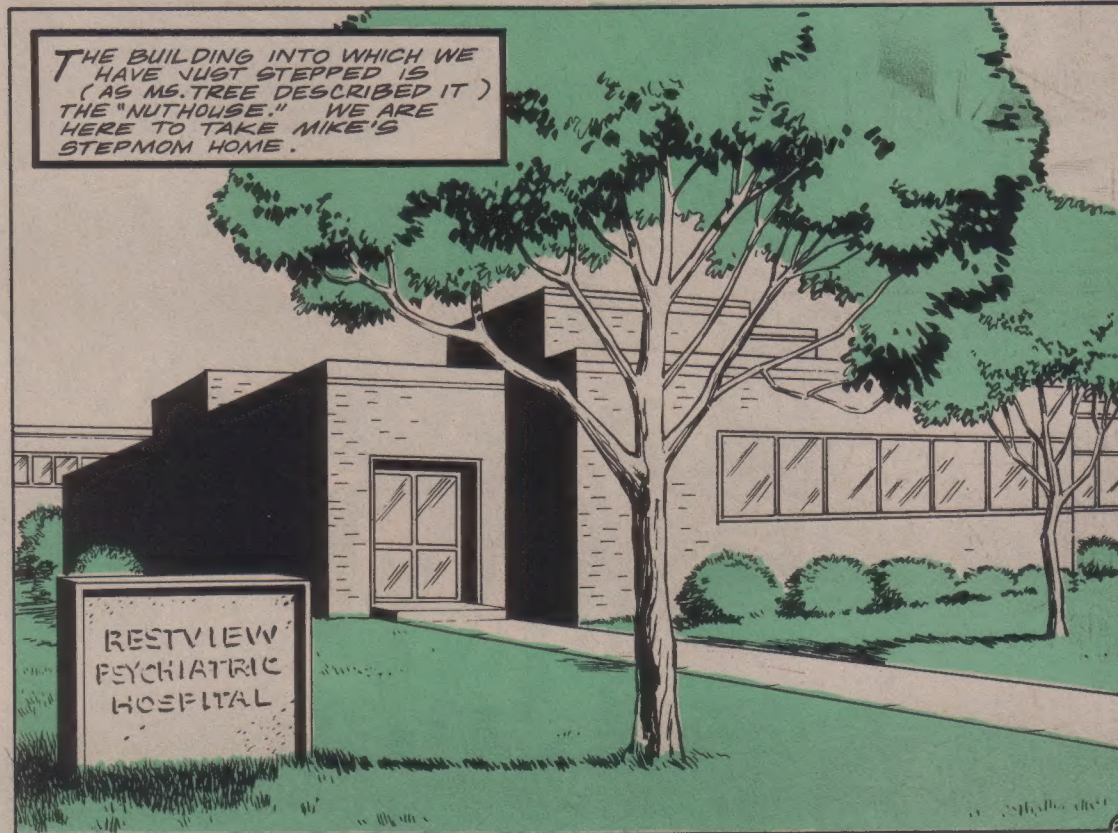
I'M DAN GREEN.
JUNIOR PARTNER
IN TREE
INVESTIGATIONS, INC.,
WHICH MAKES ME
A PRIVATE EYE,
I GUESS.



IF I FIND
THE TERM
"PRIVATE EYE"
"IRONIC," IT'S
BECAUSE I
ONLY HAVE ONE
EYE MYSELF.
BUT THAT'S
WRONG - I DO
HAVE TWO EYES.
ONE OF THEM
HAPPENS TO
BE GLASS,
HOWEVER -

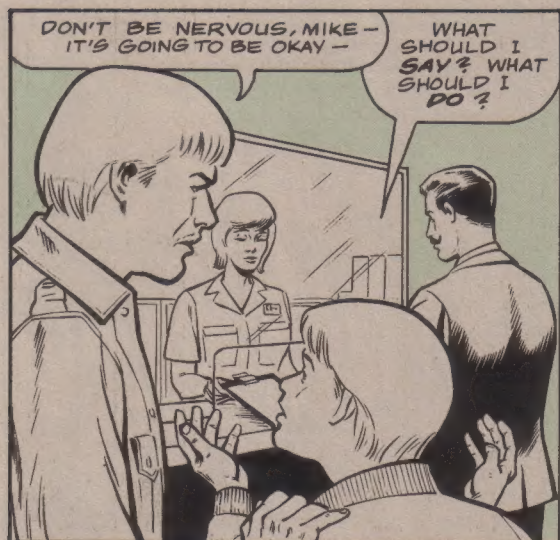


ACCOMPANYING ME IS BRYAN HAND,
EXPATRIATE BRITISHER WHO IS
THE TUTOR / BODYGUARD OF THE
"LAD" (AS HAND CALLS HIM),
MIKE TREE JR. - MS. TREE'S STEPSON.



THE BUILDING INTO WHICH WE
HAVE JUST STEPPED IS
(AS MS. TREE DESCRIBED IT)
THE "NUTHOUSE." WE ARE
HERE TO TAKE MIKE'S
STEPMOM HOME.

RESTVIEW
PSYCHIATRIC
HOSPITAL



DON'T BE NERVOUS, MIKE -
IT'S GOING TO BE OKAY -

WHAT
SHOULD I
SAY? WHAT
SHOULD I
DO?

THE KID HASN'T SEEN HIS STEPMOM
SINCE SHE WAS ADMITTED HERE
- THREE MONTHS AGO... WHEN SHE
WAS DIAGNOSED AS HAVING A
"SCHIZOID PERSONALITY DISORDER"...



SAY WHAT YOU
FEEL - BUT TAKE
IT EASY ON HER -

CUT ME A
BREAK!
I'M NO
CREEP!

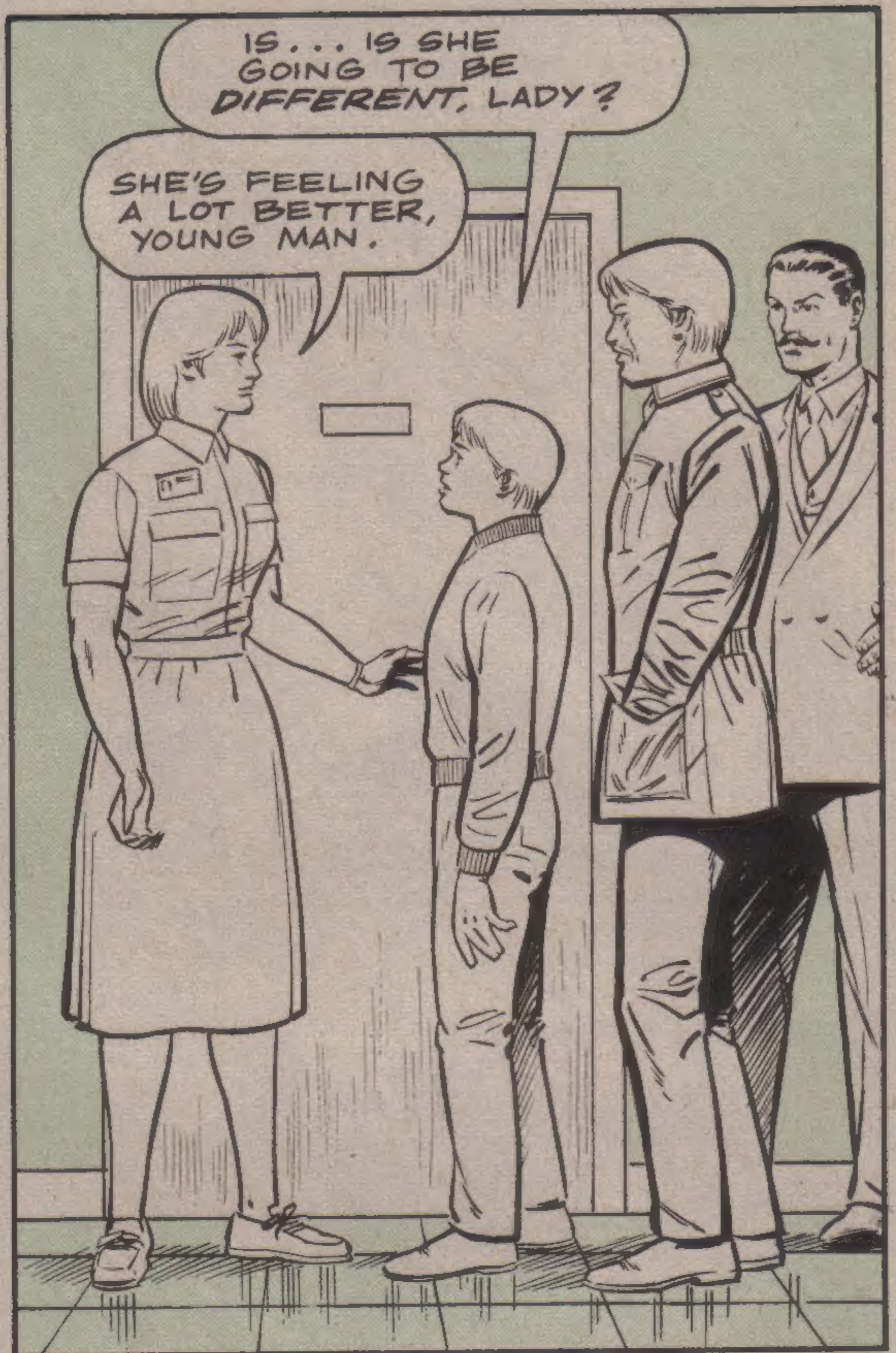
EAST WING
RECREATION

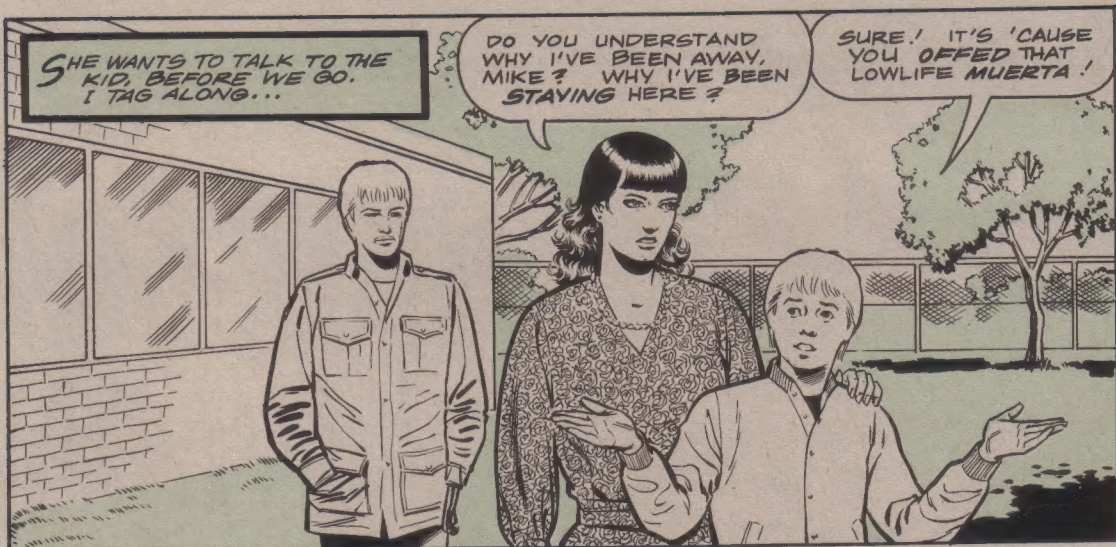
"JUST BECAUSE MS. TREE AND ME
HAVEN'T ALWAYS GOTTEN ALONG
DOESN'T MEAN I DON'T CARE
ABOUT HER - "



SHE'D ALWAYS BEEN
THERE FOR THE KID.
I GUESS HE'D NOTICED.

THIS WAY,
GENTLEMEN -
SHE'S JUST
GETTING
HER THINGS.





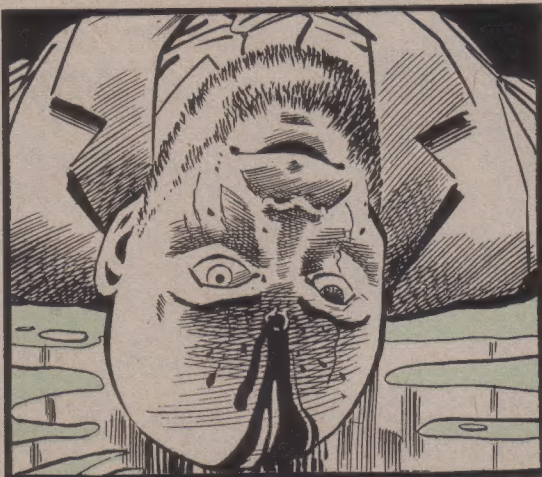
SHE WANTS TO TALK TO THE KID, BEFORE WE GO. I TAG ALONG...

DO YOU UNDERSTAND WHY I'VE BEEN AWAY, MIKE? WHY I'VE BEEN STAYING HERE?

SURE! IT'S 'CAUSE YOU OFFED THAT LOWLIFE MUERTA!

THAT IS THE REASON. HE WAS AN AWFUL MAN - RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR FATHER'S DEATH. THE THINGS HE DID DROVE ME TO THE BRINK OF MADNESS -

"PERHAPS ACROSS THE BRINK - OVER THE EDGE. I MURDERED. YOU KNOW, MY FATHER'S A COP..."



"HE'D HAVE NEVER DONE THAT, MIKE. HE'D HAVE BROUGHT MUERTA TO JUSTICE - NOT 'VE BEEN SO CRAZED AS TO APPOINT HIMSELF EXECUTIONER..."

"I'VE TRIED TO USE VIOLENCE TO RE-SHAPE THE WORLD, TO MAKE IT A BETTER, MORE SANE PLACE. IN SO DOING, I WENT INSANE. I KNOW THAT NOW."







"THEY HAVE PUT YOU IN DANGER, THESE ACTIONS OF MINE HAVE..."



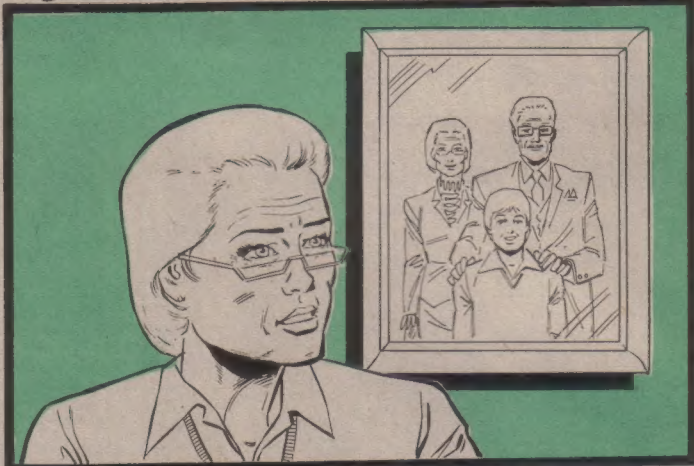
"YOU'VE HAD TO HIDE OUT LIKE A FUGITIVE, FOR FEAR THE MUERTAS WOULD STRIKE AT ME THROUGH YOU..."



I WANT TO LIVE WITH YOU!
YOU'RE MY FAMILY NOW! DON'T
DO THIS TO ME —



"IT'S FOR THE BEST — YOUR GRANDMOTHER LOVES
YOU VERY MUCH. SHE CAN GIVE YOU A REAL
CHILDHOOD —"



IS THAT WHAT
YOU THINK I AM?
A CHILD?

PLEASE —
LET'S NOT
FIGHT.



COULD WE
GET OUT
OF HERE,
PLEASE?

WHAT DID
I DO
WRONG?

DON'T ASK ME.
I'M NO FAMILY
COUNSELLOR.



SHE HADN'T SPRUNG THIS ON MR. HAND
YET. SEEMS SHE WANTS HIM TO
CONTINUE ON AS MIKE'S BODYGUARD,
IF NOT TUTOR —

I'D DO ANYTHING
FOR YOU AND THE
BOY, M'UM.

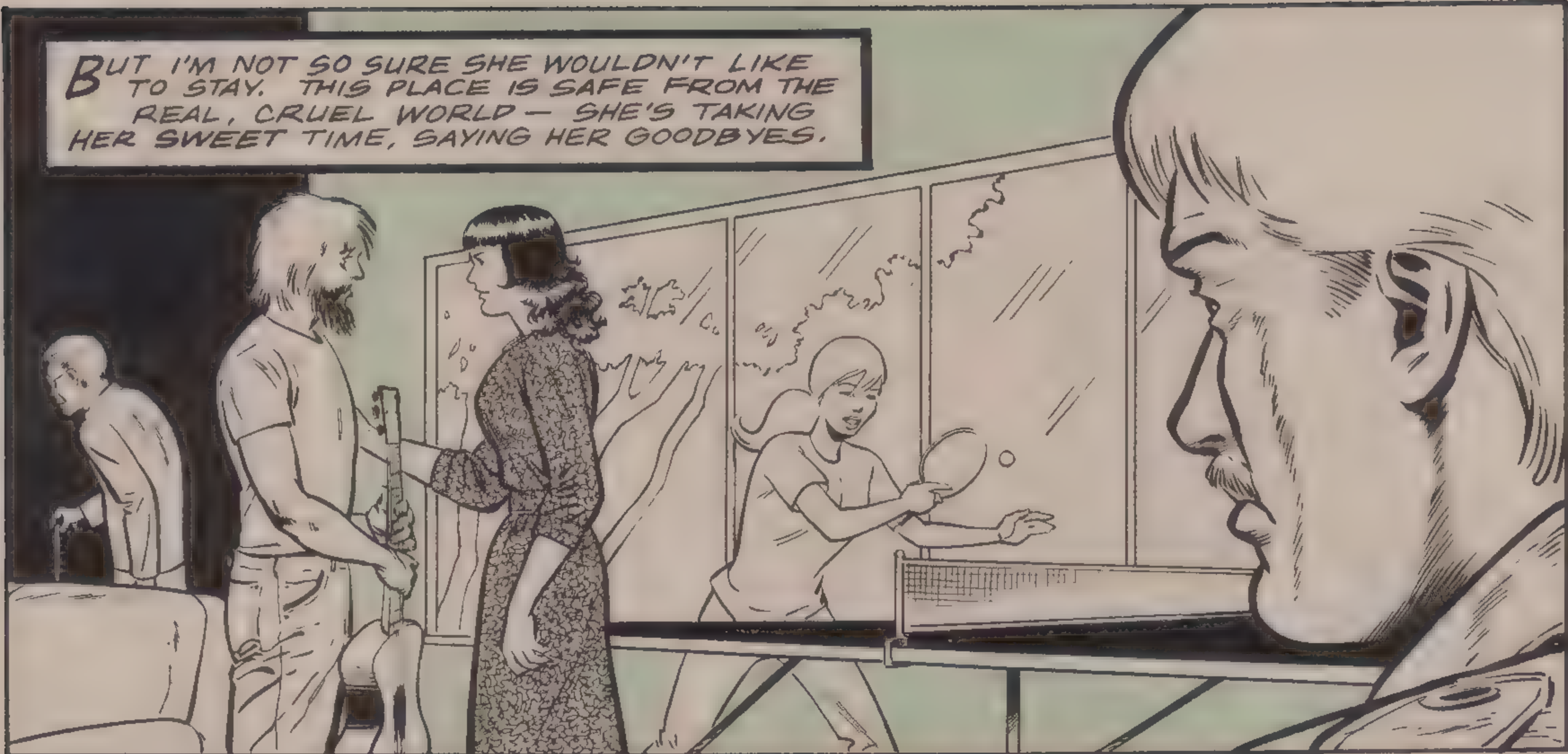


MS. TREE — LET'S GO. YOU
HAVE TO LEAVE THIS PLACE
SOONER OR LATER. YOU
DON'T WANT TO STAY, DO YOU?

ER, NO —
OF COURSE NOT.



BUT I'M NOT SO SURE SHE WOULDN'T LIKE TO STAY. THIS PLACE IS SAFE FROM THE REAL, CRUEL WORLD — SHE'S TAKING HER SWEET TIME, SAYING HER GOODBYES.

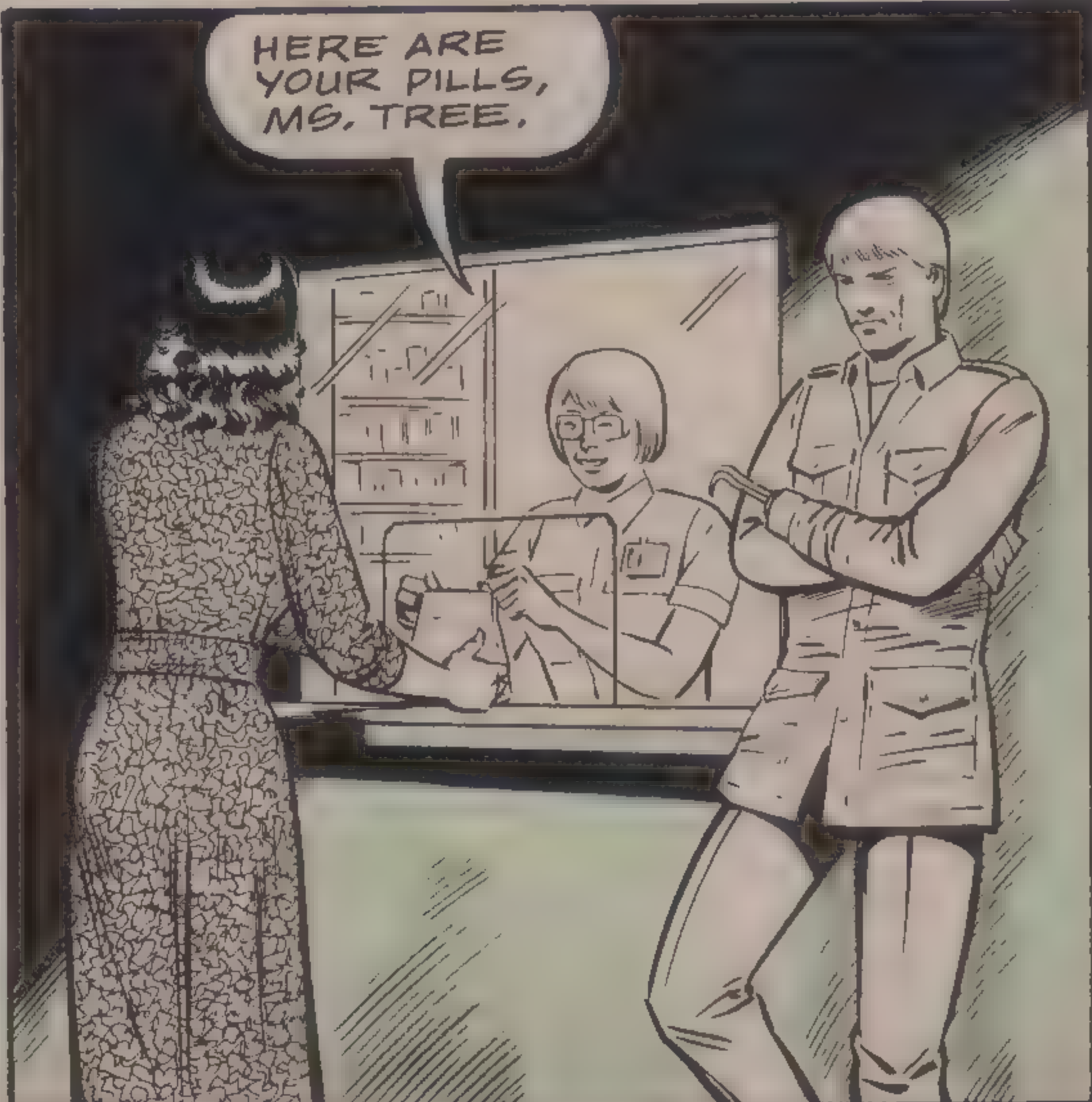


THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING DR. SYKE. FRANK.

YOU'VE DONE IT YOURSELF, MICHAEL. GOOD LUCK — UH, DON'T FORGET TO STOP BY THE PHARMACY WINDOW —

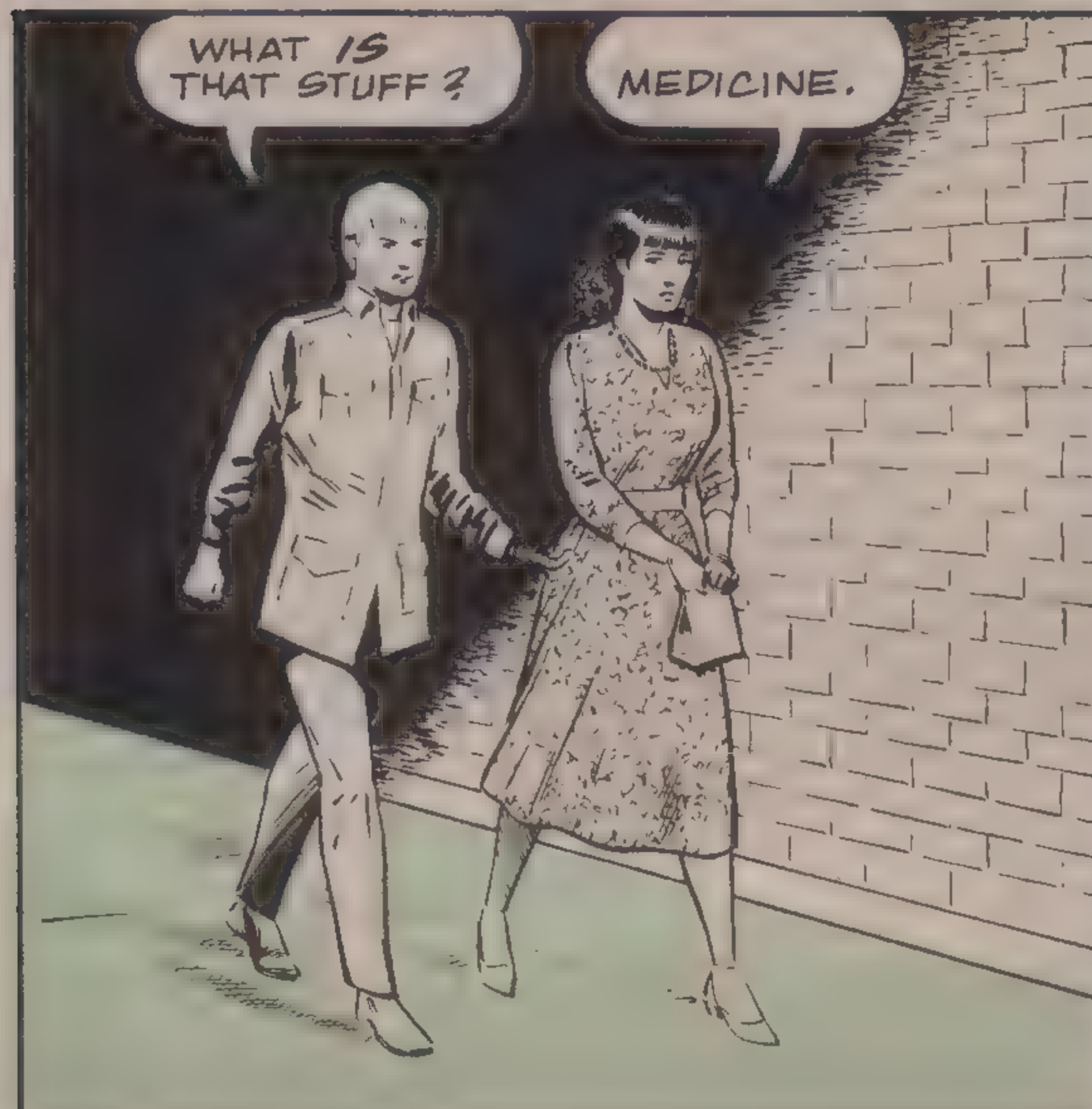


HERE ARE YOUR PILLS, MS. TREE.



WHAT IS THAT STUFF?

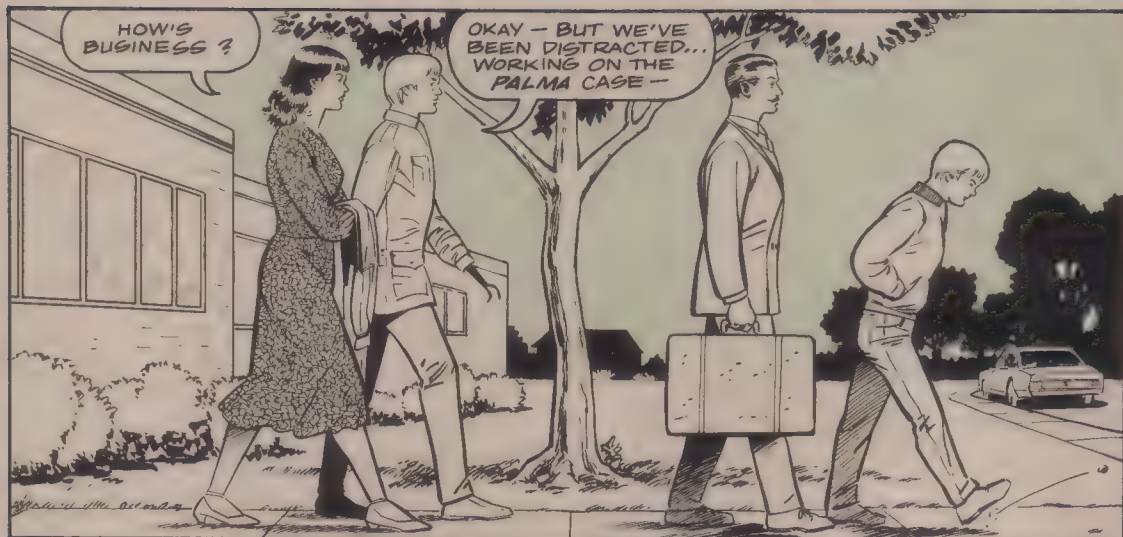
MEDICINE.



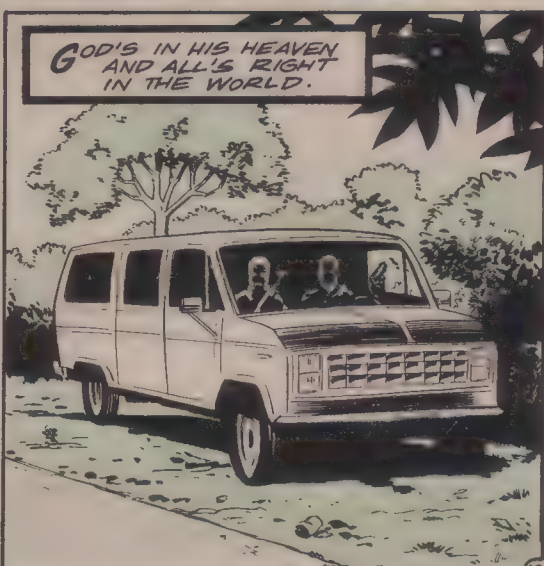
YOU'RE NOT TRANQUILIZED, ARE YOU?

DAN, MY TREATMENT'S BETWEEN MY DOCTOR AND MYSELF. THANKS FOR YOUR CONCERN, THOUGH —

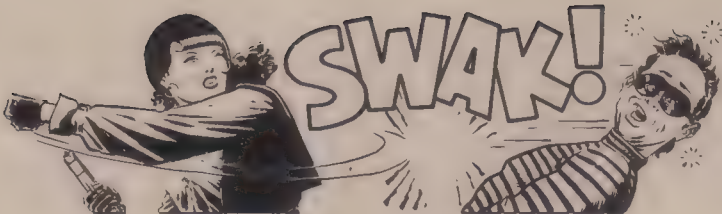




"OR HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THAT THAT MOB-TAINTED SENATOR COMMITTED A MURDER AND THEN COVERED IT UP ? "



TO BE CONTINUED THIS ISSUE -



Address all letters of
comment to:

SWAK

P. O. BOX 1007
MUSCATINE, IA
52761

Dear Max,

I have been enjoying the current **MS. TREE** storyline and had, in fact, said to my wife a couple of issues before it happened that Ms. Tree was headed for the "Gray Bar Hotel," and the next thing you know there she is, on the inside looking out. Actually, with the way you take your coming storylines out of the action in the current issues, sending Ms. Tree to jail, even if the stay proves to be temporary, was a logical move, and I enjoyed your homage to the great Australian soap opera **PRISONER: CELL BLOCK H**. You did Frankie Doyle and company proud, just as you have tipped your fedora in the past to the other shows, literary works, and individuals.

I also appreciate the struggle you are undertaking trying to breach the gap between comic readers and mystery readers, trying to get each group to sample the entertainment medium of the other. You've certainly set yourself a tough row to hoe, but if anybody can do it you and Terry can.

Another aspect of **MS. TREE** which I find constantly amazing is your willingness to take on controversial issues and handle the resolutions through the character traits you have instilled in Ms. Tree even if they might disagree with your own values and politics on the same subject. It is very difficult to remain objective when telling a story about a subject, be it abortion, runaways, or child molesters, which you have strong views on yourself as I know you do. Keep up the good work, and keep stirring the pot in your letters column.

Paul Bishop, CAMARILLO, CA

*I'm glad to see that mystery writer/cop Paul Bishop is still reading **MS. TREE** - and speaking to me - after we stupidly if inadvertently left his name off his column of guest reviews that filled in for **SWAK** in issue #23. And while I'm apologizing to and thanking people, let me publicly thank reader Shirley A. O'Brien of Arlington, Texas, for sending me the first episode of "City of Angels," completing my taped collection of my favorite television detective show; I'll be sending you the episode **you're** missing, Shirley, soon. Thank you so much! If you any of you saw Wayne Rogers interviewed on **LARRY KING LIVE**, by the way, I was the guy who called in the "City of Angels" question. (Nobody out there has yet found Shameless Max a copy of **DRAGNET '67** by Bob Trailins.)*

Dear Deni, Max, Terry and Gary,

Now that I picked myself up off the floor on which the limb came out from underneath me, I can write in a more normal, cooler way (my younger brother is a re-born Christian and he can get your goat in a bad way.) Let me reword what I really meant. I do believe everyone has his or her right to like any sex they prefer, but when it comes down to young children contacting AIDS I cut the line. Yes, Max, it is the "closet-gays" you have to worry about because there are without a doubt some "closet-gays" giving blood to blood banks, and for God's sake look what happened in Hollywood (poor Linda Evans, she had the stuffing scared out of her because of Rock Hudson's neglect and uncaring actions). So I would like to apologize to those gay people (Fred Averick - my statement about no names also was not meant for all you gay folks - just those who hide) who do think about their fellow man, and wish them all the luck in the world.

Issue #26 "Heroin Withdrawal" is a very different approach to a "comic book" (for some reason I kept expecting Jack Nicholson to pop up somewhere and ask for the TV to be turned on). I think after this storyline we'll be seeing just straight-faced P.I. stories - whichever, you know I'll always be here

Brian Daly, JACKSON, NJ

I'm sure the readers who were offended by your previous letter will appreciate your sincere apology, Brian, but they may

*feel you're still being swayed by rumor and myth, where AIDS is concerned. I don't think you've sawn off another branch out from under yourself, but I'd be surprised if future **SWAKS** didn't bring a thorny response or two to your follow-up letter.*

Dear Max and Terry,

Alright, hold on just a second.

You don't honestly expect us to believe that following the conclusion of **MS. TREE #25** Michael Tree marched a prison guard at knife-point to the warden's office and demanded justice, do you?

Ge...isn't she in enough trouble, as it is? I imagine that the prison she is in will have a pretty dim view of prisoners beating up the guards. In most prisons, this would assure Ms. Tree that all the **other guards** would come down on Ms. Tree like King Kong coming off a hunger strike. It would not be a pretty sight.

I realize the difficulty of Ms. Tree in a prison situation and I know you guys are doing the best you can. As I've said before, it is only realistic that Ms. Tree be jailed for her involvement in an extra-legal shooting spree. I would expect that to happen.

I would also not expect to see an issue of Ms. Tree where she simply languishes in her cell. This is a mystery comic and most readers would be bored to death if there weren't a mystery to be solved every issue. Having Ms. Tree in the slammer rather limits the directions such a storyline can take.

However, it seems that Ms. Tree is getting deeper in trouble every issue and I'm afraid you're going to write yourself into a corner. I don't want to see her get so deeply in trouble that only an impossible plot line can get her out. If she doesn't get out of prison soon, **logically** she's going to end up dead if she keeps assaulting prisoners and guards.

Now I don't want to see Ms. Tree dead, and I don't want to see her caught up in some contrived situation. So my best advice would be to have her cool it for as long as she remains in lock up.

T. E. Pouncey, WICHITA, KS

*I do indeed think Ms. Tree marched up to the nearest, honest guard or went to the warden's office and turned Miss Cole over; and I'm sure Miss Cole defended herself, but the testimony of Ms. Tree - not a criminal in the usual sense, but a "cop" who went over the line, **and** a celebrity of sorts with instant media accessibility - would bear considerable weight. Other inmates would've no doubt come forward, as well. Had this been a **prison**, rather than a jail, the points you raise would be valid, as the structure would be firm and the population more constant and therefore more prone to intimidation.*

Dear Max and Terry,

If I had known you were going to print my last letter, I would have been more discreet in discussing the surprise ending of "The Cold Dish," which, I fear, is a surprise no longer. I have this vision of fans reading the letter column in #25 and then cancelling orders for volume II of **THE FILES OF MS. TREE**. But I think Raymond Chandler once said that a good detective story is one you would read if the last page were missing, and that may also apply if you already know the solution - the point being that plot and characterization are as important as the puzzle. Hopefully, anyway.

I would like to correct a wrong impression I may have given. I never meant to imply that I am against compassion itself, or that all crimes and all criminals should be treated the same. I do agree that justice should sometimes be tempered with mercy, at least for non-violent, first-time offenders. But any emotion, including compassion, can be misplaced, misguided, or carried too far. And compassion, like revenge, can have unintended consequences. A parole board may consider it compassionate to release a prisoner, but a person

being murdered by the paroled ex-convict might not agree.

I don't think that "bleeding heart liberals" have a monopoly on compassion, or that "hard liners" or "conservatives" are necessarily callous. While the Ms. Trees or Dirty Harrys may seem insensitive to criminals, the bleeding-heart types are often just as insensitive to the innocent victims of crime. They can shrug off the murder, rape, or injury of innocent people, but are horrified by self-defense (which they call "vigilantism" or "police brutality," depending on whether the person shooting back at his attackers is a cop or a civilian). The Goetz case may be an example; there would have been no publicity or controversy if the muggers had killed him.

Glenn Harwood's attitude is another typical (and realistic) example. He remained calm enough throughout the kidnappings, sexual mutilations, and murders, then became outraged by Ms. Tree's vigilantism. His sanctimonious condemnation of her actions seems ironic, since his attitude toward the serial killer was "I have no right to judge."

My low opinion of Harwood is based not on his compassion but on the double standard: he can excuse, rationalize, or forgive a child molester, but not a parent who went berserk and took revenge on the child molester. Also, for all the insistence that Harwood is not weak, the fact remains that he stood idly by while Billy Bob attacked Ms. Tree and almost killed her. (He could easily have covered him with the revolver, ordered him to surrender, and held him at gunpoint until the cops arrived. That would have prevented the attack on Ms. Tree **and** the vigilante murder that followed. Even if Billy Bob had resisted, forcing Harwood to shoot him, at least then the killing would have been legitimate self-defense, not vigilantism.)

If justice is to be tempered with compassion, that should include compassion for so-called "vigilantes." I don't see how anyone can really **blame** a parent for wanting to kill a child molester, or a widow for wanting to punish her husband's murderer, or a man wanting to kill the bomber who maimed him. Revenge is irrational, but how can a victim of violence be expected to be rational?

I'm not trying to get in the last word, or win an argument. If you disagree with my views, fine, but I did want to clarify my position.

Re: Mad Mona and Brian Daly - I like Jamie Rose and I don't really dislike "Lady Blue" (it is not bad, just routine, a typical "maverick cop" show), but I can't quite see her as Ms. Tree. For lack of a better word, she doesn't seem nasty or bitchy enough. Veronica Hamel could put just the right sneer into the wisecracks and tough dialogue. I would also consider Jane Badler, Sigourney Weaver, and Karen Allen, among others.

I agree with Mark Pruitt about a "breather" issue. It could also serve as a "sampler" for potential new fans.

Tom Crunkleton, ATLANTA, GA

Thank you for speaking directly to the too-often ignored aspect of Ms. Tree's "vigilante" response to Billy Bob: her personal involvement, i.e., that she was a mother protecting and defending her child and that she dealt out a death sentence to the would-be molester/murderer of her child. (Again, I must insist that we don't know whether Billy Bob was unconscious or not, when shot by her; she may indeed have killed him in self-defense. I won't spell that one out, kids; even popular art gets to be ambiguous now and then.) It's certainly gratifying that, all these months later, #17 is still generating mail and discussion. "Runaway" is shaping up as the definitive MS. TREE tale. Oh, and I think your list of potential movie Ms. Trees is a good one.

Hi--

I'm writing first to say I enjoy Ms. Tree's adventures and second to offer a bit of historical perspective. I've just collected and written an introduction to an anthology of mystery stories to be published this spring by St. Martin's Press. Entitled **HARD-BOILED DAMES**, it includes 15 short mystery stories from the 1930's pulp magazines featuring women detectives, reporters, spies, adventurers and crooks. Ms. Tree's ancestors in the pulps included Carrie Cashin, who hired a man to front for her at the Cash and Carry Detective Agency; hefty Sarah Watson and Violet McDade, each of whom ran an agency; Trixie Meehan, Patricia Seaward and Grace Culver, each an operative for a PI agency in different story series.

Of interest to comics fans are two other pulp female dicks (not included in the anthology) who were featured in two-page comic strips in the old magazines. Betty Blake, daughter of

Inspector Blake, formerly a New York cop, has joined her dad's agency in a series which ran in **SUPER DETECTIVE STORIES**. The strip was by H. Parkhurst.

And Sally the Sleuth's cases were featured in **SPICY DETECTIVE**. Sally, who managed to shed her clothes to wild-eyed maniacs in most of the adventures, has a pint-sized pard named Peanut. The artwork was by Barreaux.

Bernard Drew, GREAT BARRINGTON, MA

*Thanks for the info, Bernard; we look forward to your book. I'm familiar with **SALLY THE SLEUTH**, which was a two-page feature in the tradition that **MIKE MIST** continues. Would our readers like to see a sample of the sexy **SALLY**?*

Dear Max and Terry,

You know, if I was the most powerful person in the world, I think I'd have to go right out and do something awfully darn nice for Larry Marder this very minute. I mean, not only is he the writer/penciller/inker/letterer/colourist/editor/publisher of **TALES OF THE BEANWORLD** (one of the very finest comic books available today), not only does he produce some of the best and cleverest letters around, not only does he seem to be an enthusiastic fan and all-round-swell-kind-of-guy, but in addition to all this he is the person who got me reading this very mag! As time passed, I found myself enjoying **MS. TREE** more and more, until now it is pressing for admission to the very elite ranks of my top favourites list. Yeah, if I was the most powerful person in the world, Larry'd be in for a big **something**. (In fact, as far as anyone else knows, I just may really **be** the most powerful person in the world anyway! So, Larry, don't discount the possibility of a wonderful event in your future. And the rest of you, well, you'd just better be really nice to me, is all I can say!)

It was issue #26 that put me into this frame of mind, that stepped **MS. TREE** up another level in my list of favourites. It continued the dual trends that have been lately apparent: the willingness to confront difficult social issues and the construction of an interesting and unusual protagonist in Ms. Tree.

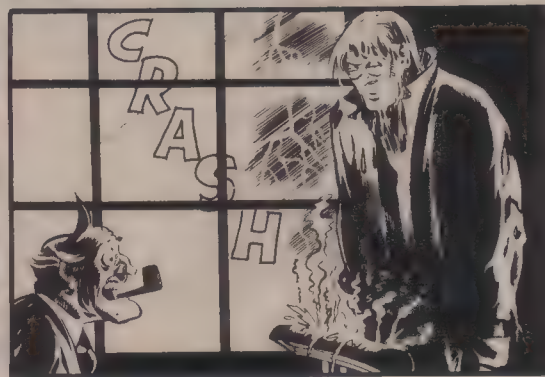
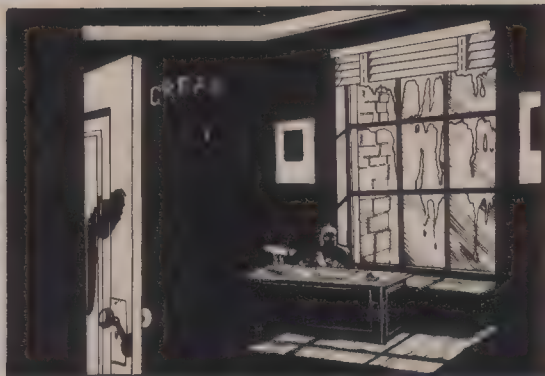
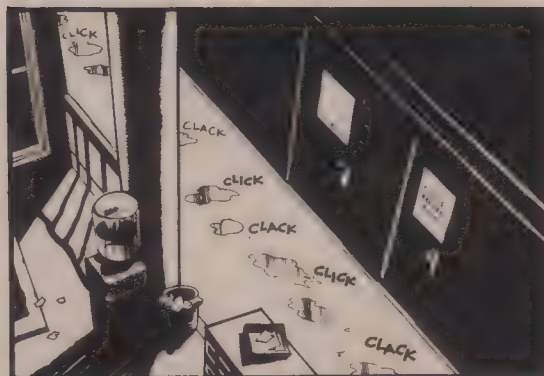
The social issue this time is psychiatry and its relationship with criminality and life in general. I think that even psychiatry's proponents would agree that where it is a science at all it is a rather imprecise science. This is due to the fact that its subject matter, humanity, is little understood, complex, and inconsistent. For instance, nuclear particles do not lie or try to fool experimentors -- human beings do. What is the role of psychiatry in the criminal justice system? What should it be? Are we grasping at straws? Are we sluffing off on a pseudo-science, difficult questions that would be better answered in the court? Or is psychiatry a bone fide and objective treatment that merely furnishes facts?

And apart from court-related functions, what is the worth of psychiatry? Is it no more than a helping hand or is it indeed an objective science with true benefits? Ms. Tree looks at it as so much mumbo jumbo -- a hindrance to her resuming her normal life. To her it is a game that she must win and if she must thus play by that game's rules then so be it. But she only wants to play **superficially**, not get drawn into a substantial personal change by the deeper aspects of the "game".

To Ms. Tree, psychiatry is maddeningly vague. As she thinks the "charges" against her apply to any number of "normal" people: "aloof," "few close friendships," "indifferent to feelings of others," etc.: However, I would state that vagueness does not necessarily imply unreality. Just because the difference between, say, sanity and insanity can be very difficult to decide does not mean that the difference does not exist!

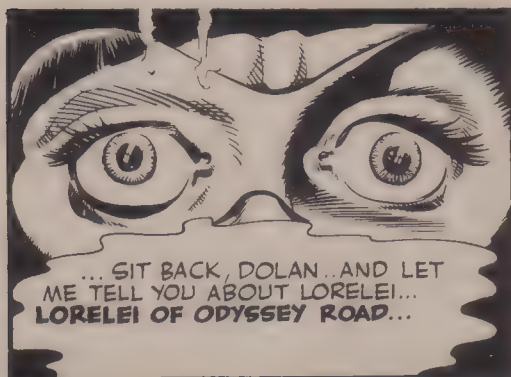
Through this confrontation with psychiatry, we get a closer look at Ms. Tree -- and it's not a pretty picture. In many ways, her background is unremarkable and her justification of her actions and character are merely normal and understandable. But there is an undercurrent of feeling that something is not quite right. Is it that her "everyday" not-so-wonderful background is just too extreme? Or is it that she thinks that it is **all** okay, even admirable? Most of us have aspects of ourselves that we would want to change and if we accept them it is with an air of resignation -- and recognition that they are **flaws**. But Ms. Tree seems too self-satisfied -- or is this just a mark of rational acceptance of herself for what she is? No, there is something that is not worthy of it

continued on page 29



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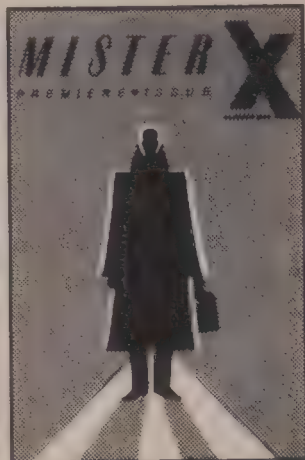
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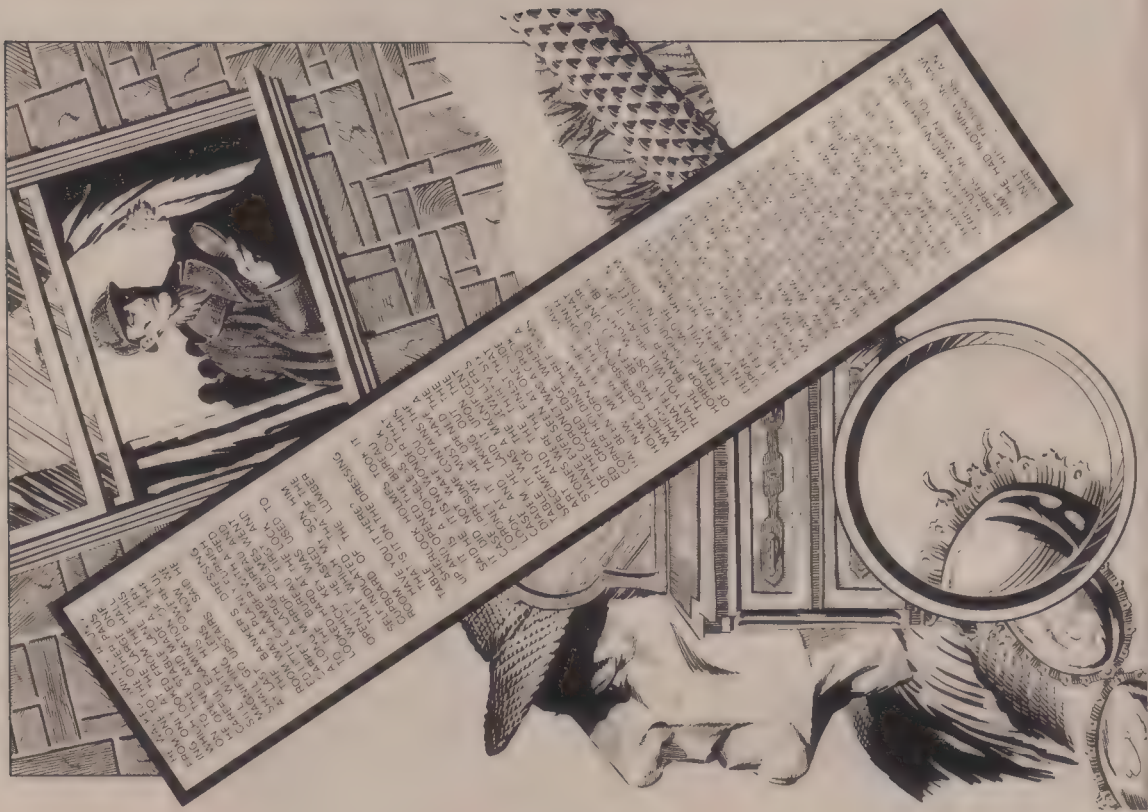
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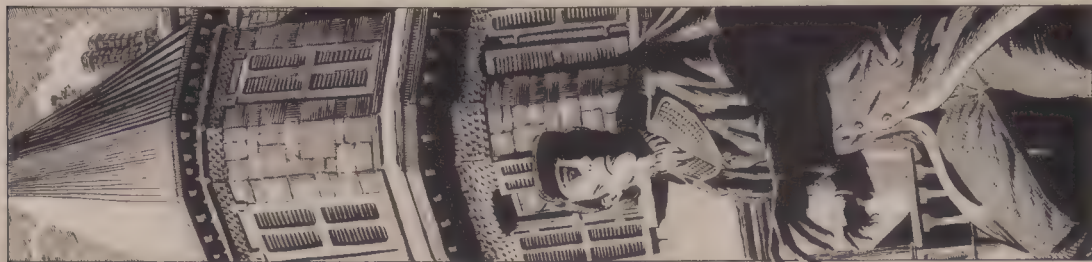
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TREE

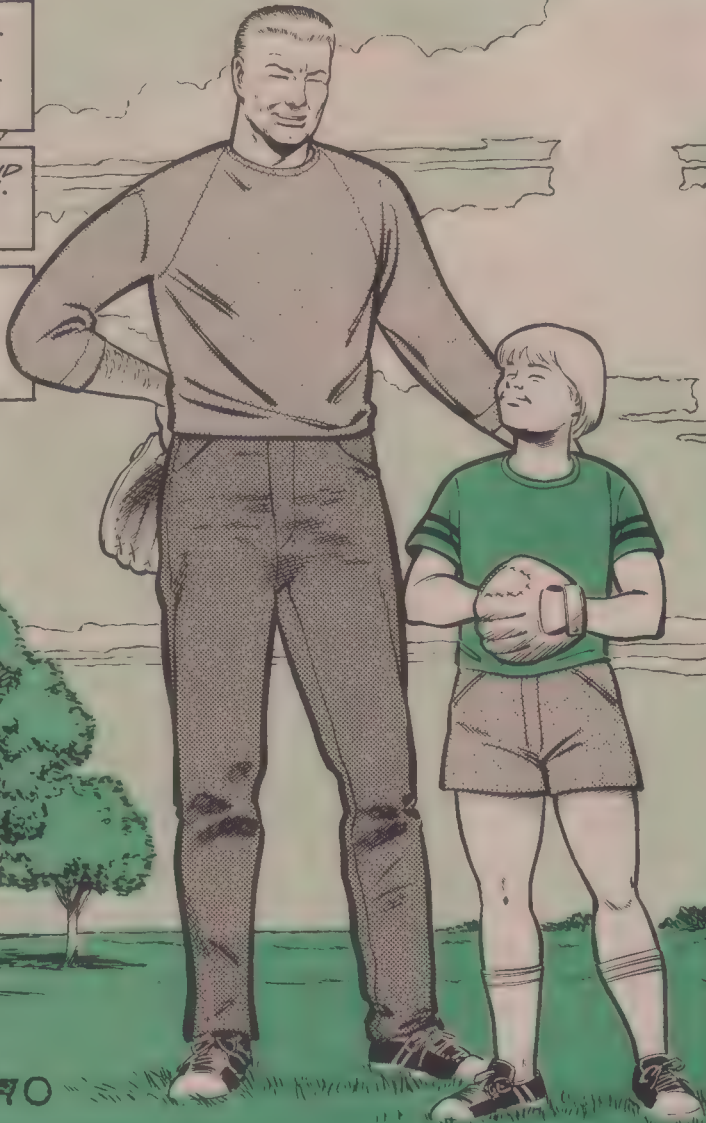
"THE OTHER
CHEEK"

ROAD SHOW

MY NAME'S MIKE TREE.
MIKE TREE, JR.
MY DAD IS DEAD.
HE WAS A GREAT GUY—
OR SO THEY TELL ME.

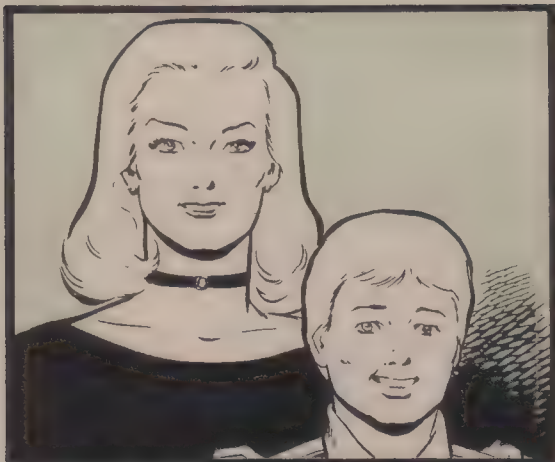
I DIDN'T GET TO SPEND
MUCH TIME WITH HIM.
SATURDAYS,
TWICE A MONTH.

TOOK A COUPLE
VACATIONS WITH HIM.
HE NEVER SAID
MUCH, BUT I THINK
HE LOVED ME AND
EVERYTHING.



Chapter Two

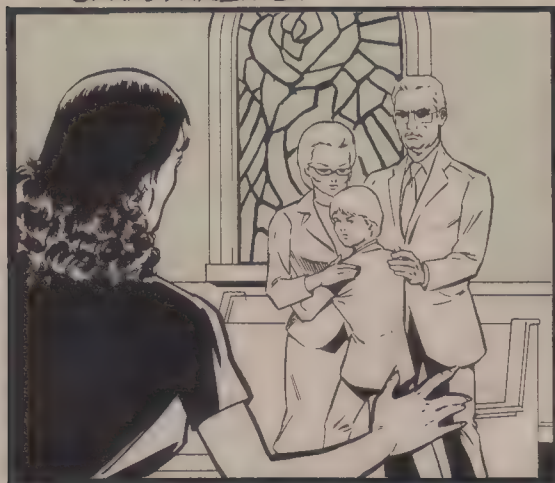
MY MOM'S DEAD, TOO.
SOME GANGSTERS KILLED HER.
I MISS HER.



A WHILE BACK I MOVED IN WITH MY
DAD'S SECOND WIFE. MOM SET IT
UP THAT I SHOULD DO THAT IF
SOMETHING BAD HAPPENED.



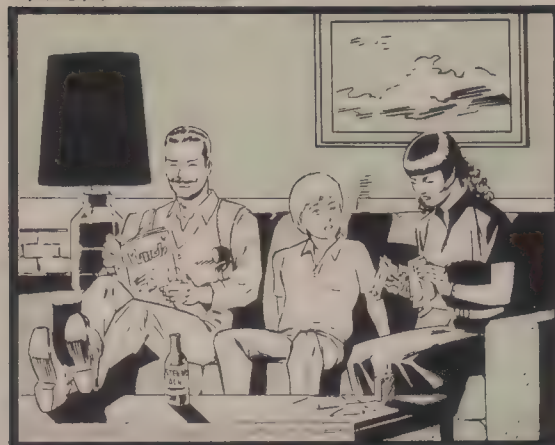
WE DIDN'T GET ALONG TOO GOOD.
I WANTED TO LIVE WITH MY
GRANDPARENTS.



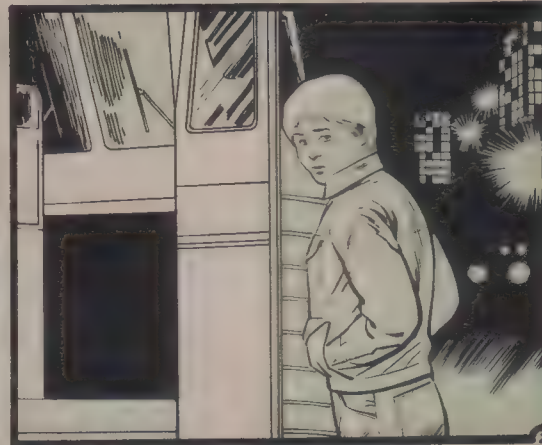
BUT MS. TREE — THAT'S HER NAME —
STUCK TO HER GUNS. THAT'S
SOMETHING SHE DOES A LOT.



SHE DIDN'T SPEND MUCH TIME
WITH ME, BUT SHE HAD THIS
NEAT BRITISH BODYGUARD TEACH
ME... THAT WAS PRETTY COOL AT FIRST,
TILL I STARTED MISSING MY FRIENDS
FROM SCHOOL.



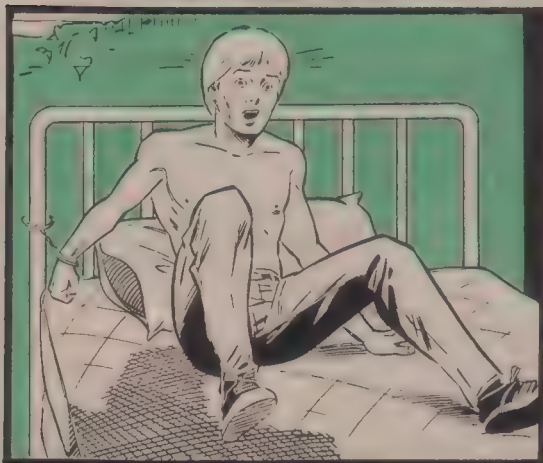
SHE SAID IT WAS TOO DANGEROUS
FOR ME TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL.
THOSE GANGSTERS MIGHT TRY
SOMETHING. I DIDN'T LIKE THAT,
SO I DID SOMETHING STUPID —
I RAN AWAY.



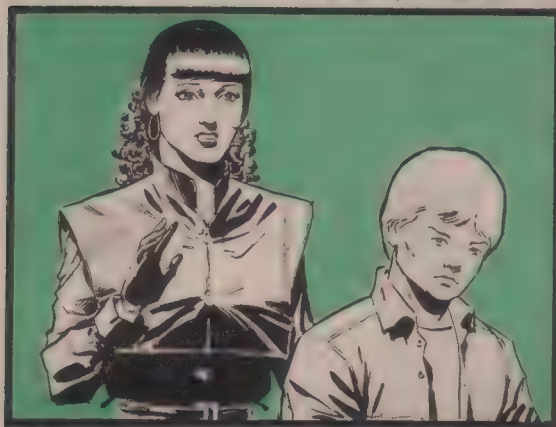
I GOT IN A LOT OF TROUBLE, SO DID A FRIEND OF MINE, WHO ISN'T ALIVE ANYMORE. I DON'T WANT TO TALK ABOUT IT.



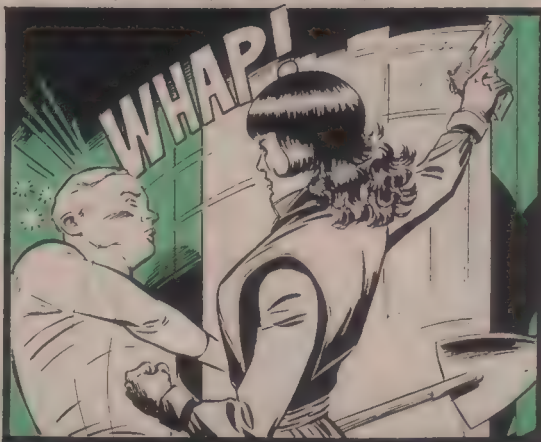
BUT, ANYWAY, MS. TREE SAVED ME, AND I REALIZED ALL OF A SUDDEN THAT SHE REALLY DID CARE ABOUT ME.



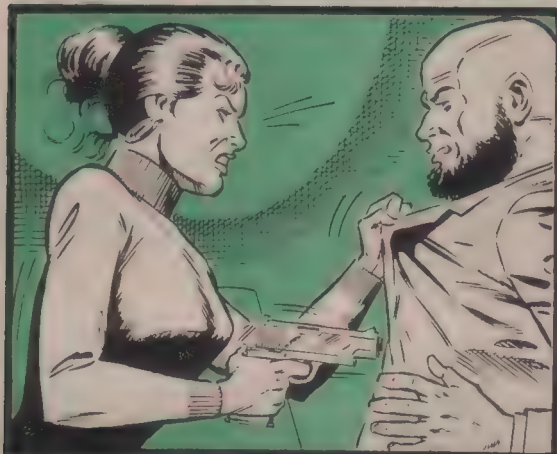
FUNNY THING IS - I DIDN'T LIKE HER AT FIRST, BECAUSE I GUESS I RESENTED THAT DAD LIKED HER MORE THAN MOM. BUT, ALSO, SHE WASN'T LIKE MOM. SHE WASN'T, YOU KNOW, MOTHERLY LIKE A MOTHER.



BUT AFTER SHE SAVED ME FROM WHAT HAPPENED TO MY FRIEND, I SAW SHE WAS MORE LIKE DAD. SHE WAS STRONG AND SHE SHOWED SHE CARED, IN HER OWN WAY.



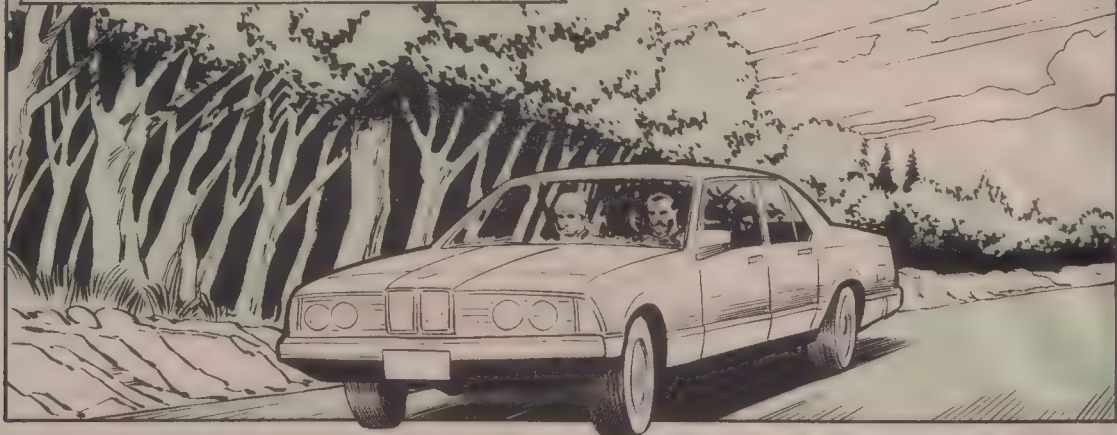
NOT LONG AGO SHE GOT IN TROUBLE, BECAUSE SHE SORT OF KILLED THIS GUY - HE WAS THE BASTARD WHO WAS BEHIND DAD GETTING KILLED. I THOUGHT IT WAS COOL, WHAT SHE DID.



BUT SOME PEOPLE DIDN'T, AND THEY MADE HER GO TO JAIL, AND THEN TO AN INSANE ASYLUM. WE'RE TAKING HER HOME TODAY - AND SHE JUST ISN'T THE SAME.



THE CRAZY THING IS SHE DOESN'T WANT ME, NOW. SHE'S SET IT UP FOR ME TO LIVE WITH GRANDMA. (GRANDPA GOT KILLED.)



OF COURSE, I STILL LIKE YOU, MIKE. I THINK OF YOU AS MY OWN SON.

THEN HOW CAN YOU SEND ME AWAY?



I'LL BE FAR AWAY FROM YOU — IN A NEW TOWN, WHERE I WON'T HAVE ANY FRIENDS...



YOU'LL MAKE NEW FRIENDS. AND YOU TOLD ME, MANY TIMES, YOU'D RATHER LIVE WITH YOUR GRANDPARENTS THAN ME.



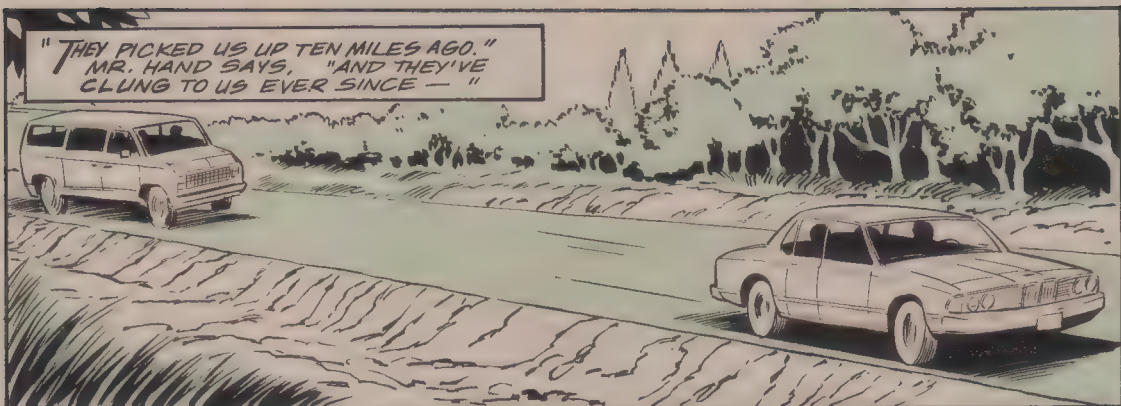
THAT WAS BEFORE. GRANDPA'S GONE, AND, WELL ... I WANT TO STAY WITH YOU, MS. TREE.



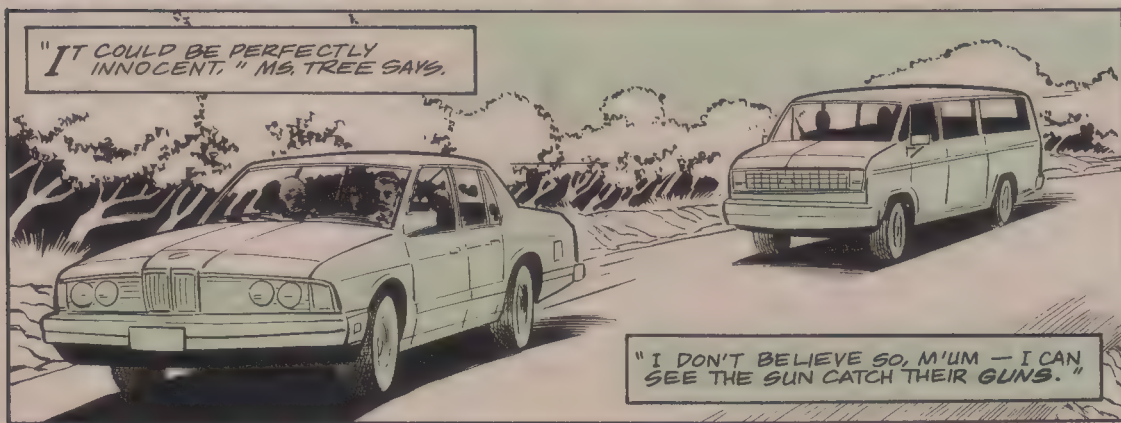
I'M AFRAID WE HAVE COMPANY, M'UM. YOU AND THE BOY MAY WANT TO GET DOWN...



"THEY PICKED US UP TEN MILES AGO,"
MR. HAND SAYS, "AND THEY'VE
CLUNG TO US EVER SINCE —"



"IT COULD BE PERFECTLY
INNOCENT," MS. TREE SAYS.



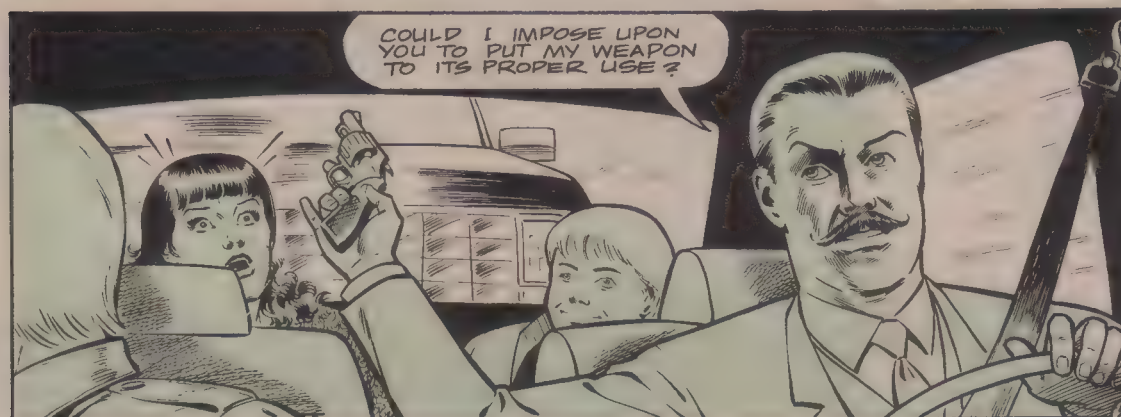
"I DON'T BELIEVE SO, M'UM — I CAN
SEE THE SUN CATCH THEIR GUNS."

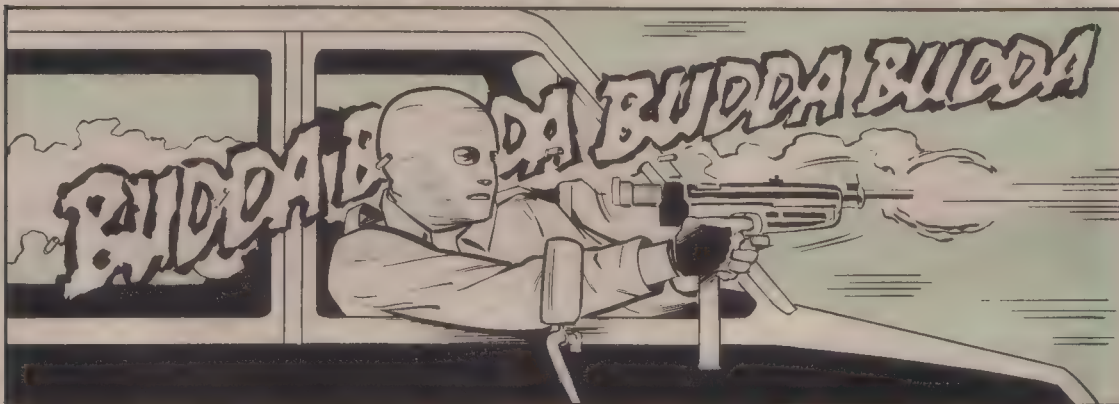


THEY'RE
COMING UP
FAST.

M'UM, I DON'T BELIEVE
I CAN SHOOT AND DRIVE
SIMULTANEOUSLY —

COULD I IMPOSE UPON
YOU TO PUT MY WEAPON
TO ITS PROPER USE?



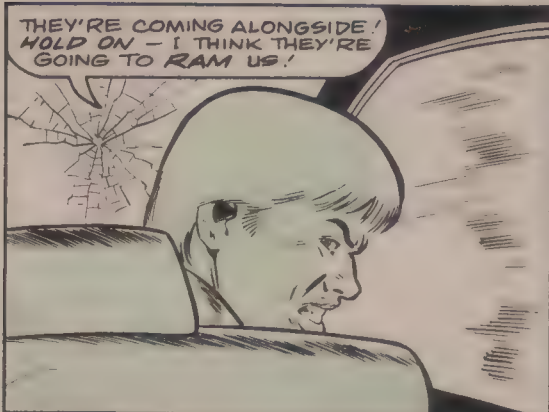
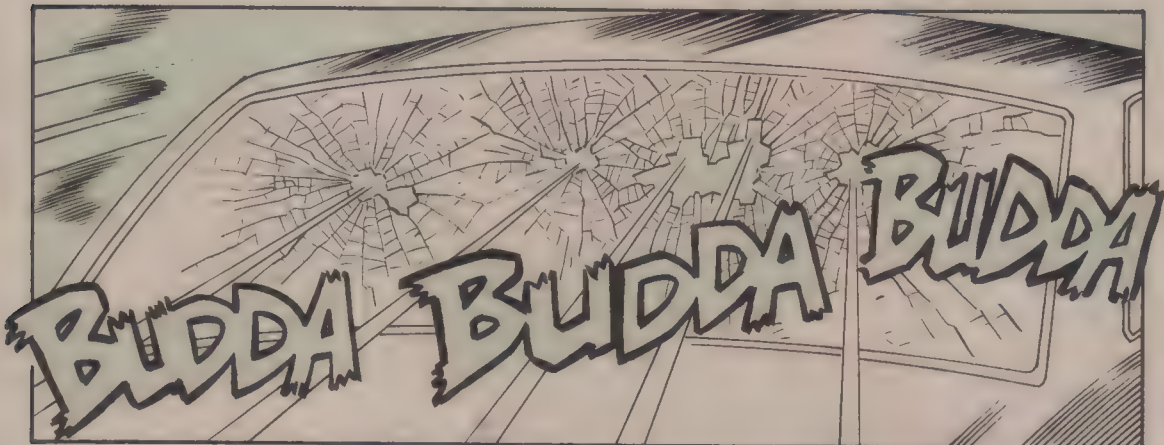


BUDDA BUDDA BUDDA

KABLAM



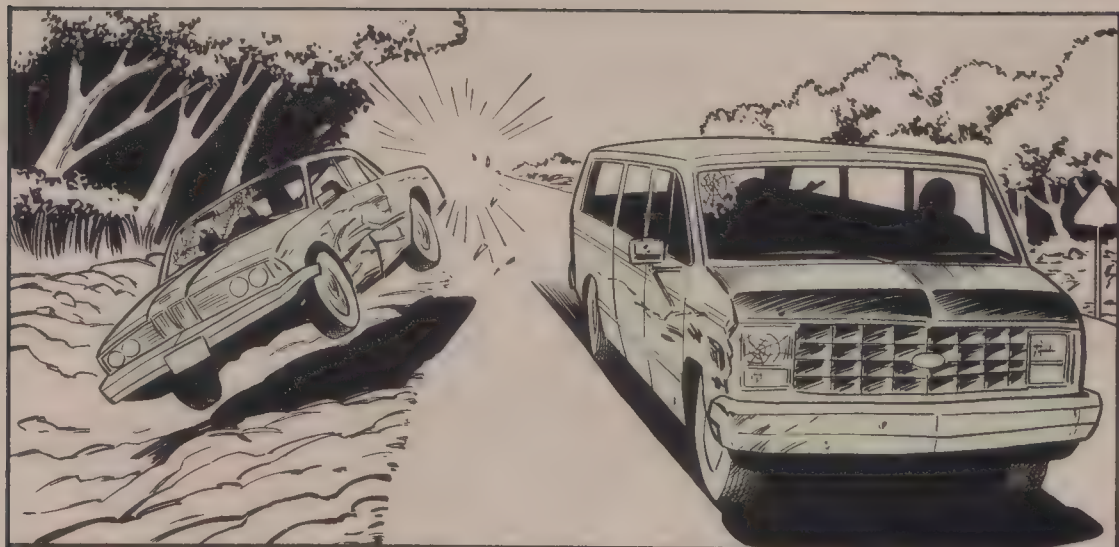
KABLAM KABLAM

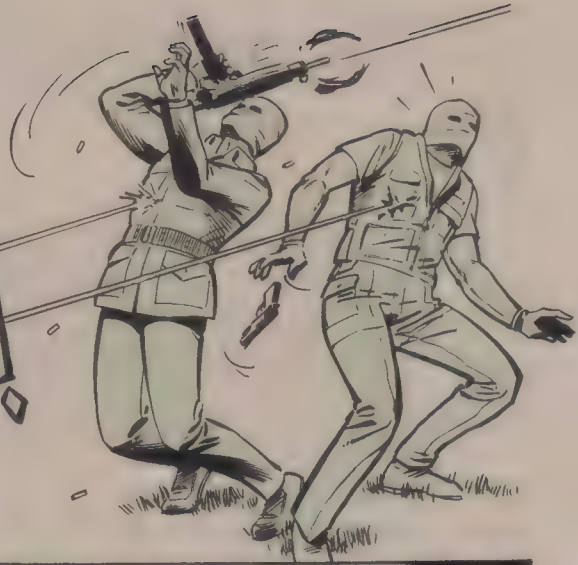


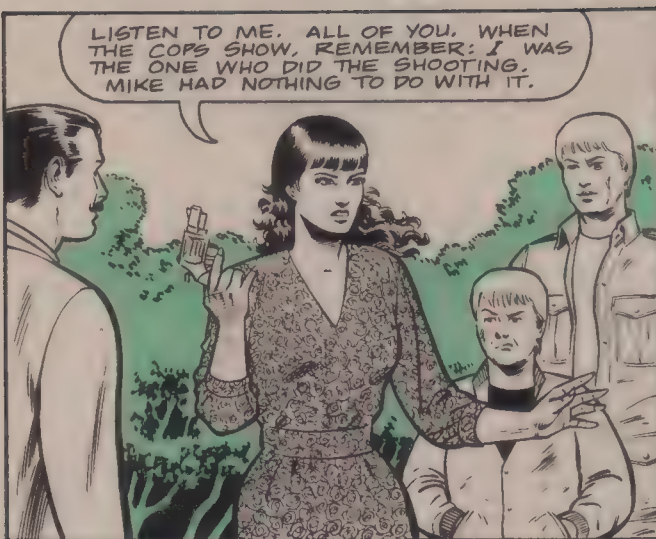
THEY'RE COMING ALONGSIDE!
HOLD ON - I THINK THEY'RE
GOING TO RAM US!



GIVE ME
THAT!

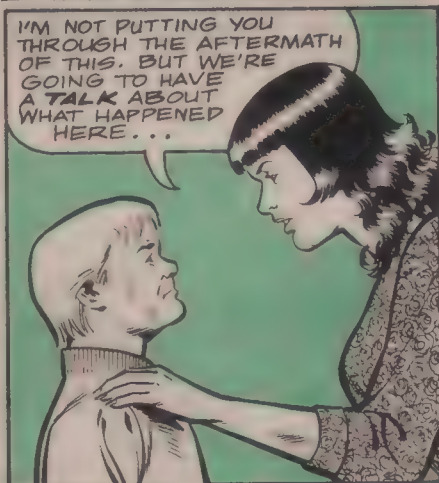






LISTEN TO ME. ALL OF YOU. WHEN THE COPS SHOW, REMEMBER: I WAS THE ONE WHO DID THE SHOOTING. MIKE HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT.

LIKE I SAID, SHE HAS FUNNY WAYS OF SHOWING SHE CARES.



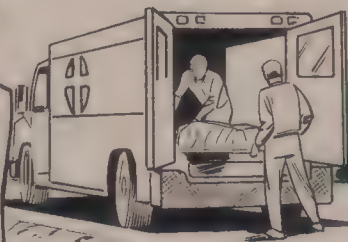
I'M NOT PUTTING YOU THROUGH THE AFTERMATH OF THIS. BUT WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A TALK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED HERE...

THIS GUY CAPTAIN MEYERS SHOWED UP PRETTY SOON. HE'S A REAL NERD.



SO YOU'RE CURED, HUH?

I'M FEELING BETTER. THANKS FOR YOUR CONCERN.



ON YOUR WAY HOME FROM THE NUTHOUSE, YOU KILL ONLY TWO PEOPLE. YOU'RE SLIPPING, MS. TREE!



I'M DISAPPOINTED IN YOU.

I DON'T THINK YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE, CAPTAIN...



TO BE CONTINUED NEXT ISSUE

Earlier, I called Ms. Tree the protagonist of this mag. I think it is clear that she is not a hero -- at least not now. One aspect of a hero is that he rises above any adverse circumstances in his character. Ms. Tree seems merely to have **accepted** what she was "given" and **built** on that. While this may indeed be better than many/most of us accomplish, it is not in the heroic mould. She has merely made the best of a situation -- not the best of herself.

I can't end this letter without congratulating you on your four-page lettercol. I loved it! (And I say this even though none of my letters appeared!) Also, I want to put it on record that I solved the Mike Mist mystery this time. So there. Is Ms. Tree **really** Joe Friday's daughter?

T. M. Maple, WESTON, ONTARIO

Joe who?

Dear Deni, Max, Terry, Gary, etc.,

Great book. Clean art. Tight narrative. On-register color. Et soddng cetera. This letter is primarily in response to your "Right to Die" issues and to David Porta's letter in **Ms. Tree** #26.

The main problem I have with Mr. Porta's argument involves his discussion of "associative logic" and "deductive logic." He states that "associative logic," which he claims is at work in the "Right to Die" story, appeals "not to the rational faculty but to the impulsiveness of human nature." He thereby implies that what he saw as a "pro-choice" treatment of abortion involved arguments based in "emotionality and irrationality."

Mr. Porta's argument contains a crucial assumption: that "deductive logic" is somehow better or more valid than "associative logic." This is, quite simply, a fallacy, and it is a misconception that also lies deep at the heart of the controversy surrounding the "morality" of abortion.

"Deductive logic," like the use of terms such as "rational faculty" or "human nature," is a convention, a way of thinking that serves as a tool to deal with certain aspects of the "world" or "reality." Deductive logic is **not** reality; nor is it a mechanism by which reality operates. It is a human construction, a problem-solving framework. However our society often operates on the premise that the rules of logic are a sort of "natural law"; for example, logical deductions serve as fact in certain types of court cases. A well-formed argument in logic is "true," regardless of its contents. In the eyes of society, this metaphor takes on a reality of its own.

Contemporary feminist theorists have attacked the privileging of deductive logic and its status of equivalence to fact or reality as a social (patriarchal) preconception. Although some feminists (such as Mary Daly) avoid patterns that they view as the "territory" of a male-oriented society, this is not to say (as some have) that feminist theory is "illogical" or "irrational"; in fact, it is probably the most thought-out and self-critical of contemporary movements. Instead, the point is that "deductive logic," like "associative logic," is a convention, not a truth, and thus no more valid than any other convention. A mode of thought, like a tool, works where it is appropriate.

By most any approach through deductive logic, abortion is "murder": it is the willful termination of another human being's life. Some pro-choice feminists (including myself) offer a counter-argument that Mr. Porta would doubtless say stems from an application of "associative logic." It is true that the woman who carries an unborn child has a responsibility not to take that life lightly. (The man who impregnates a woman has a responsibility not to take that life lightly.) But in some cases (I leave these to the woman), the woman's life will be affected by pregnancy in extremely adverse ways (I'm being general here to try and lay emphasis on the **woman's** decision). Abortion is a **viable** alternative for that woman, a **justifiable** alternative, because she has a **fully-developed** life and the fetus does **not**. She may or may not **choose** abortion, but it is a justifiable alternative.

This isn't a "logical" argument. It's not a "rational" argument. But for me it is a valid one, and it comes after a lot of thought, not a burst of "emotionality." In my mind, anyone who can equate the life of an unborn fetus to that of a woman with an already-established life, a complement of life's experiences, is operating with an awfully warped sense of "logic" and its relation to reality or what is **right**.

Mr. Porta says that "society should not condone immoral behaviour." But "morality" in this context is social morality, and I don't agree that society should condemn behaviour, the morality of which is "majority" in the society determines.

Society often picks these forms of "immoral" behavior relying on an oversimplistic and ill-informed "logic" (e.g. the sledgehammer syllogism Porta himself mentions -- terminating a life is murder, abortion is terminating a life, therefore, abortion is murder). But life's just not that simple. When we as a society "logically" conclude that an unborn child has as much "right to life" as a grown woman, we are forgetting that we're talking about a woman. Not a "womb," as Mr. Porta says. A whole, living, growing **woman**.

Russell Shaddox, PROVIDENCE, RI

*While my own studies of logic are pretty much confined to STAR TREK reruns, I am glad to see Russell Shaddox impressively show that issues like abortion are **not** clear-cut, black-and-white ones. That we acknowledged this view in "Right to Die" explains why **that** continuity was so controversial.*

Dear Max,

Congratulations on **MS. TREE** #26: it was another brilliant issue. I think you did an excellent job of keeping Ms. Tree in character while making her appear insane to the hospital's shrink. I think it is a secret fear of most people that if they were put in the wrong situation they would have trouble proving their sanity. We all hold things inside ourselves that we fear others would consider "crazy." The flow of the story was very natural; it didn't seem contrived at all.

Now about the "origin" sequence in the story. On page two of Chapter Two you mentioned Ms. Tree's father was a cop and you showed his Los Angeles Police badge with the number 714. Hmm...if memory serves me correctly, that was Joe Friday's badge number on the old "Dragnet" TV show. Quickly looking through my copy of "Files of Ms. Tree" reveals that Ms. Tree's maiden name was Friday. Did you plan from the beginning to have Ms. Tree be Joe Friday's daughter? The legal problems of actually writing the connection in a published work probably makes a Ms. Tree/Joe Friday team-up impossible, even as a flashback.

I just read "Nemo" #17 with your interview of Chester Gould and some reprinted Dick Tracy stories. First of all the interview was very entertaining. Mr. Gould's contribution to the eventual rise of superhero comics has been underated. The one thing that struck me about the reprints was the level of violence. People were thrown off bridges, left in burning buildings, tortured with metal spikes, shot, and impaled by a flagpole. Compared to all of this the violence in **Ms. Tree** doesn't seem so bad. If the kids of the 30's could take all that and grow up to be normal, at least I've always considered my parents normal, maybe people are worrying too much about what is being written today. I guess the whole point of this rambling is that I don't think that violence alone in comics is going to screw up anyone's life. How the violence is presented is much more important than the actual act of violence. Needless to say I think you are doing a good job in not glamorizing the violence in **Ms. Tree**.

Before I end I just want to say that Mike Mist is interesting every month. When will he be appearing in a longer story in the future? Another appearance with Ms. Tree perhaps?

Michael Marz, DULUTH, MN

*You are so right that members of several generations that grew up on all sorts of Saturday Matinee violence seem intent upon denying that simple fun to the next few generations. Poop on 'em, if I may be so harsh. As for Mike Mist and Ms. Tree meeting again, very soon **MS. TREE Summer Special #1** will feature a new crossover, "Music to Murder By." This will be a special rock 'n' roll oriented issue, with the little-seen, but critically-praised "Bobby Darin Story" by Terry and me, as the back-up feature; also, a text feature about my years as a singer/organist in rock 'n' roll bands is planned. As for Joe Friday being Ms. Tree's pop, let me make something perfectly clear (as somebody or other used to say): could be. Jack Webb, particularly his **DRAGNET** (and I'm talking about the brilliant black-and-white series of the '50s, not the later, lesser color one of the '60s), has been a big influence on me, as a writer, particularly in my dialogue. Suggesting that Joe Friday **might** have been Ms. Tree's father is meant as an homage, much as the hints in Rex Stout that Nero Wolfe is related to Sherlock Holmes are a form of homage; we can only go so far with this, before we're in a copyright violation area. So don't expect to see Webb's image, or anything more substantial than what has thus far appeared.*

ORIGINAL MS. TREE ARTWORK FOR SALE. PAGES ARE \$50.00 each, except those marked with an *. Number of * indicates number of panels per page that are pasted-up photocopies (usually flashback panels or scene-setting exteriors). *=\$30.00 **=\$25.00 ***=\$15.00

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DEATH DO US PART

Chapter

One:5,7,8

Two:1,5

Three:2,4

Four:4,5,8

Five:6,8

Six:5,7*

Seven:2,5,6**

THE COLD DISH

Chapter

One:3,4,7,8

Two:2,3,4,7,8

Three:1,5

Four:5

Five:1,3,4,5,9

Six:2,4,5,7

Seven:3,4,6*,8

Eight:2,4,6

Nine:4

Ten:4,5,8

DEADLINE

Chapter

One:3,7,8*,9**,10

Two:7*,9

Three:2**,3,4,5

Four:2,3,5,7,8,10

Five:3,4

Six:1,2,3,5**,6,10

Seven:5**,7,8,9*

Eight:1,8

SKIN DEEP

Chapter

One:1,2,6,8,9

Two:5,7,8

Three:6*,7,8,9

Four:2,3*,4*,6,7

RUNAWAY

Chapter

One:1,2,3,4,7,8

Two:1,7*

Three:3,5,9,10

Four:4,6

MUERTA MEANS DEATH

Chapter

One:3,4,5*,10

Two:1

Three:4,9

Four:3,4,5,9***

Five:2,4*,8*,9*

Six:3*,4,10*

Seven:2*,3*,4,6,7*

Eight:1*,2*,5,7**,8***

RIGHT TO DIE

Chapter

One:1,2,3*,4,7,9

Two:4,6*,7,8,9

Three:3,6*,8,10*

Four:2,7*

PRISONER CELL

BLOCK HELL

Chapter

One:1,2*,7,9,10*

Two:1,2,7

Three:2**,3,6,7*

Four:2,5,7*

HEROINE WITHDRAWAL

Chapter

One:7,8,9*,10*

Two:3,4*,5,9*,10*

Three:2*,4*,6,7,10**

Four:1,2,3*

CLOSE SHAVE

(MUNDEN'S BAR)

Pages:1,3,5

(inks by Don Lomax)

THE P.I.s #1

Pages:3,4,5,7,8,9,10,

11,12,13,14,15,16,19,

20,24

(pencils by Joe Staton)

Some PHONY PAGES

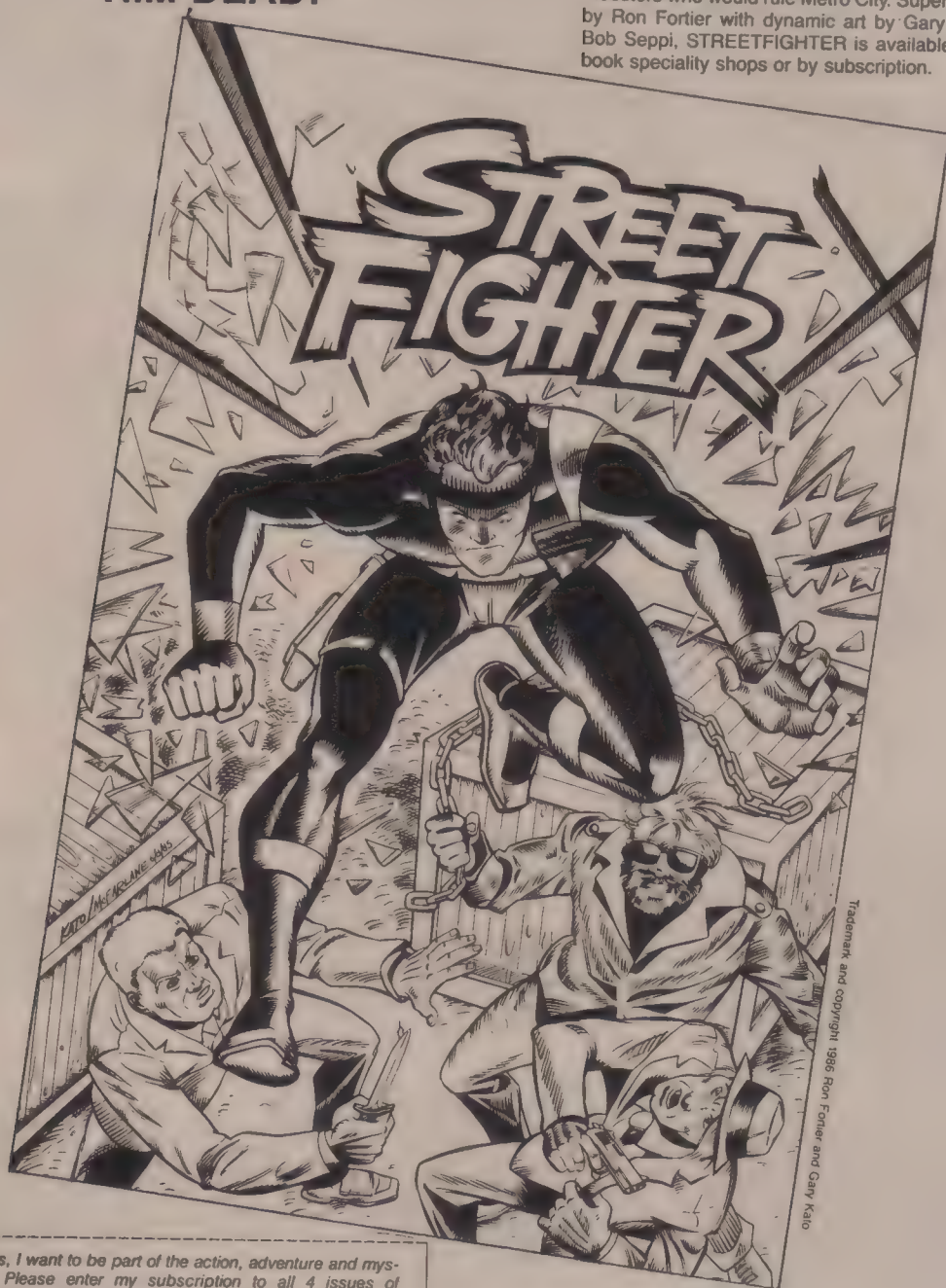
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DITKO'S WORLD

DITKO'S WORLD

featuring STATIC

No. 2 of 3

editor: Robin Snyder

Cover: Art & Color by Steve Ditko

Static, Fera, Doc and two European immigrants are thrown together in this month's adventure. All of them face the "Decision." It's outcome means life and death, success and failure, freedom or slavery. "Thunbolt Lives Again" explores two parallel themes: force and revenge. A novel SF thriller.

Everybody and his brother wants a piece of him. The cops, the underworld, the average joe. Who has the brains and guts to answer the call: "Get Mr. Quiver." Not The Rookie. Surely not The Rookie.



Ms. TREE #30

"The Other Cheek" continues.

written by: Max Collins
drawn by: Terry Beatty, with
assistance by Gary Kato

As her partners zero in on a murdering US Senator, Ms. Tree's passive resistance results in deadly consequences for those around her.



NEIL the HORSE No. 14

created, drawn and written by: Arn Saba
with assistance from Barb Rausch

Gala end of the series issue!! Neil may or may not be riding off into the sunset, so, this last issue is a farewell collection of favorite stories put together by artist/creator Arn Saba. It will include Arn's "special stories" that have appeared elsewhere, as well as two new songs, previously unpublished art and letters, letters, letters. There are hints that there MAY BE a new story in the works, but Arn will promise nothing, except he will try to be more on time.

Cases of Sherlock Holmes

the ADVENTURE of the DANCING MEN

by Sir ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE
illustrated by
THOMAS ARTHUR DANIEL DAY

HOLMES HAD BEEN SEATED FOR SOME HOURS IN SILENCE WITH HIS LONG THIN BACK CURVED OVER A CHEMICAL VESSEL IN WHICH HE WAS BREWING A PARTICULARLY MAUDLIN PRODUCT. HIS HEAD WAS SUNK UPON HIS BREAST AND HE LOOKED FROM MY POINT OF VIEW LIKE A STRANGE LAMB BROOD WITH DULL GREY PLUMAGE AND A BLACK TOPKNOT.



CASES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES No. 2

"The Adventure of the Dancing Men."

Story - Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Art - Dan Day

Cover - Dan and David Day

What are the dancing men?
Why do they terrify a woman?
Where will they appear next?
And who is behind them?

Sherlock Holmes must answer the mystery, are they the drawings of a child, or the hand of death?

MAXWELL MOUSE FOLLIES



MAXWELL MOUSE FOLLIES No. 3

written and drawn by: Joe Sinardi
"For the Woman He Loves"

The first of a two-part story. Maxwell is heartbroken when Monica announces she is going to Europe with not one but TWO Princes!! In this issue, he decides to fly to Europe to talk Monica into returning. Unfortunately, flying in the 30's was a dangerous undertaking!

ETERNITY SMITH™

ABOUT ETERNITY SMITH

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His quest allies him with his daughter, SKYLARK SMITH, and the members of her eccentric rock band, and pits him against the power of a mysterious industrial giant who is determined to see that the future Smith fears-a future which could lead to mankind's eventual destruction-comes to pass!

Join us when ETERNITY SMITH begins!

written by: Dennis Mallonee

art by: Rick Hoberg



Renegade
Press

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200
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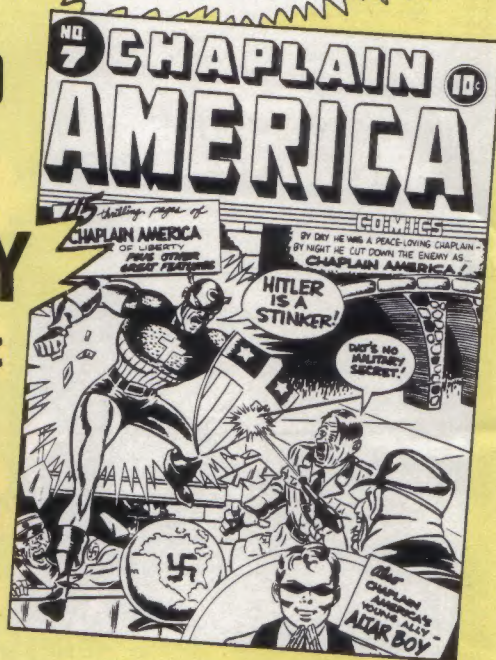
THE PHONY Pages

THE
STUNNING
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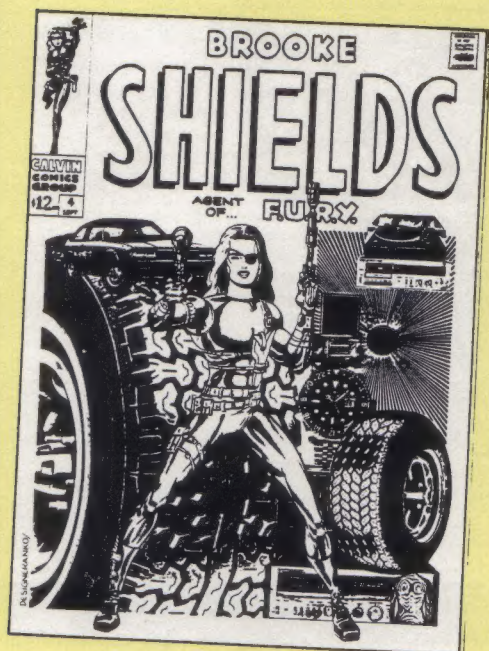


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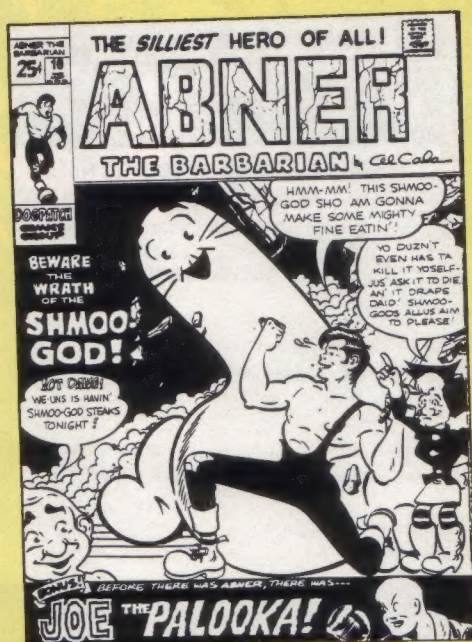
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